

ADAM

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A FIVE-DAY OF LARRY

40¢

OCTOBER, 1973



NEVER
TRUST A
MODEL
-page 26



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OCTOBER, 1973

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BETTER THAN EVENS

The \$3000 paycheck was pretty good for one charter — but when the pilot saw the Armalites he knew he should have upped the price . . .

FICTION / J. C. SHELLEY

THE THREE MEN came out of a clump of trees about 100 yards from where I'd brought the Cessna to a stop on the dirt road. Two of them were short, stocky, thick-set swarthy men, and both wore dark suits and hats.

The third man I knew. He was Paul Badue. He stood a little taller than the other two, was thinner, clean shaven except for a neat toothbrush mustache, and was intelligent. I had been introduced to him a week previously. In my mind I called him Badack because Badue was hard to pronounce.

Each man carried an Armalite rifle. I didn't like that. I clambered down out of the Cessna to meet them. The grass on the verge of the dirt road was wet with dew.

Camden lay just over the hill on the right. I could see the dining room, the tavern on Black Mountain and I felt pleased with myself that I'd landed the plane on this road safely in the dawn light — but then I'd already been paid \$1000 to do just this.

The three men came quickly across the grass where some sheep were feeding. Their car was parked in the clump of trees. Tomorrow I would return them here and receive the rest of my fee — \$3000. Not bad for roughly 1000 miles' flying. Three thousand dollars for one charter.

I could do with that sort of money more often.

But I didn't like the look of these guys. There had been no mention of guns when I'd bargained with Badack to fly him and his mates west of the Darling. He had not mentioned why he wanted to make

the trip. But the fact that he'd been adamant that he wanted to leave — and return — to Camden without being too obvious about it was the clue I'd based my fee on.

Business is business and Mr Badack didn't have to spell it out to me. My educated guess was drugs. I'd heard on the grapevine about these plants flying in from Japan, Indonesia, Iran and dropping their cargo on the outback.

Well it looked like yours truly was in it and while it paid money like I was getting for this trip, then the more flights I made the better I'd like it. But I still didn't like the look of these high-powered rifles. Gun men trouble. And if they were going to have trouble along the line then someone like Badack had to pay more for services. That was a reasonable assumption.

I didn't think for one moment that Mr Badack was out to flood the 'boma market with pot or heroin. There was more legitimate markets elsewhere. My impression, too, was that this wasn't Badack's first trip to the west. I wondered who my predecessor had been — what he had charged.

The presence of those Armalites gave me the feeling that I'd underquoted this job.

"Good morning. A lovely day for flying." Badack's voice was smooth, pleasant with a quick engaging smile to deceive you with.

"Good morning." I matched his pleasantness. "I see you are carrying guns. That wasn't in the contract. That's dangerous cargo, so I'd have to up the price by another \$1000."

"I see." He looked me over with a

cold, hard, calculating look.

"I think that's fair," I said.

"You think." Badack smiled.

"Okay, pilot, think about that then."

With a lightning movement he end-for-ended the rifle and drove the butt savagely into my solar-plexus. I sagged at the knees, gasping and one of his mates kicked my feet from under me with a cruel blow to the ankle. I fell on the ground in a heap of excruciating pain. They left me like that for a few minutes while my pants soaked and I was able to breathe again without gagging. Then one of the apes laughed me to my feet, holding me up by the collar like a bag of sudden kapok.

Badack said smoothly, "Okay, pilot, it's up to you. I don't give a continental whether you come with us or not. I can fly a Cessna West if not for yourself." He was smooth, easy, with a thin, supercilious smile on his lips.

There was hardly any need for me to think about it. Badack had spelled it out. If they took my plane and left me here I could kiss my money goodbye. The cops would think I was their fancy goldfisher if I went and went on their shoulders about my loss.

"Well?"

"Okay," I pointed. "I'll fly."

"Good!" Badack took a weighty envelope from his inside pocket and gave it to me. "That's your second thousand," he said smoothly. "Right?" I nodded. He was right of course.

"Let's go." Badack was cheerful, eager, smiling. He was a man of mood, turning them on like sunshine through drifting clouds.

Somehow or other I clambered into the Cosmos and did the pre-flight checks. But my heart wasn't in it. I mumbled awkwardly. The attack with the rifle butt had been sadistic. It rocked off the Mafia and the thing that rattled inside me was the fact that I couldn't hit back — not bare hands against guns.

Mr. Badcock would keep. Somewhere along the line I'd get even — or better than even. No one had ever made a hurry of me and got away with it.

The pain in my ankle was a dull, nagging ache that made it hard to keep my feet on the rubber bars. When the time came there would be a score to settle with the goon who'd kicked me.

We set down at Cober to take on every ounce of fuel the tanks would hold. Then Badcock set a course to the nor'-nor' west.

The Durling was in half flood as we passed over it. The river would like a dull-silver snake on the brown-gray land below. I had never been this far west before. The lonely,



"Well, so much for 'Happy Harbours'."

and land stretched unknown, monotonous, forbidding looking for endless miles to every horizon. Occasionally I'd spot a lonely homestead, a small cluster of buildings

huddled together in the immense barrenness below. But they were few and pathetically far between.

No one spoke, but Badcock was wide awake, keeping a watch on the compass and listening intently to any messages coming over on the powerful radio-telephone I'd had installed the previous year. It was because I had this powerful set already installed that I had decided Badcock on the charter flight in the first place.

Now, as we flew further away from civilization, he sat brooding over a receiving band that I hadn't known existed before. But to all intents and purposes there was nothing on it except static. Then suddenly the speaker came alive. A thin, ready voice was calling an apparent signal, "T T X. T T X."

From experience I judged the voice to be coming from 150 to 200 miles away. Apparently it interested Badcock. He began checking the compass and map. Then another voice acknowledged. The sound was too weak to make sense to Badcock. He looked pleased and rubbed his hands together in a satisfied manner.

Half an hour later he said confidently, "We'll be over the landing strip in 10 minutes, pilot. Keep east two degrees now while I check if there's anyone there. If there isn't turn away to your left and land from the west. It's a safe landing — plenty of length but narrow. Right?"

I acknowledged with a nod. I was still preoccupied with schemes of how I was going to get back at that sod for the blow in the stomach that morning. The pain in the solar-plexus sympathized with the pain in my ankle.

Everything I'd so far come up



"We'd like to ask one more question of the judge. Which is better — a royal flush or four aces?"

He was a father of the unions

MURRAY G. SPENCE was one of Australia's earliest and most vigorous trade union organizers. He made great progress in uniting all miners — gold, silver, copper and coal — but his greatest success was in organizing the shearers, whose conditions and pay were usually very bad.

They were often provided with one long hut, where they slept, ate, and had their meals prepared by a cook whom the shearers paid. As to how the shearers were paid, the agitators wanted to make individual contracts with them, while the *Amalgamated Shearers' Union* which Spence organized — wanted one contract only.

This union had expanded by 1893 into the *Australian Workers' Union*, and its membership was made up of all kinds of bush workers. The number of members in the AWU reached 50,000 in 1904, when Queensland workers joined.

By 1890, trade unions were no longer illegal, and unions were welcomed. Although there was as yet no Labor Party, working men had the vote, and voted for whatever party would grant their demands.

Lines were passed for the safety of workers, restrictions were imposed on the immigration of Chinese or Pacific Islanders who might bring wages down, and at one stage, even European immigration was not encouraged.

By bargaining with employers or going on strike, improved pay and conditions had been obtained. The eight-hour day was becoming widespread.

with wouldn't work. One unarmed man against three thugs with guns had a snowflake's chance in hell of winning. Somehow I had to get hold of one of those Armalites.

The ship turned up dead on course and time. It ran roughly east-west — a long, narrow red-brown scar in a sea of gray saltbush. Redneck looked it over with my binoculars. "Satisfied he stopped. "Okay — land!"

My wheels touched down with a puff of dust and I let her run until we were half-way along the strip. After we'd got out, Redneck said urgently, "We'll manhandle the machine into the bush, pilot."

I looked at him surprised, ready to utter a protest. But the way he held the rifle and the cold hard look on his eyes changed my mind. We skull-bugged the Cassia into a tight little cul-de-sac, broke down saltbush and covered it roughly. Redneck worked at fever pitch, cursing us to keep moving, but his mind was on something else because he kept looking up at the sky and listening.

The sun was a red-orange eye in the hazy sky westward and the heat was terrific. Sweat poured off us and I felt sick and nauseated with the pain on my gut and arse. I had brought food and water along in the Cassia, but the more water we drank the more the sweat rolled off us.

Suddenly Redneck stiffened, head up and listening intently. Then we all heard it, a plane coming in fast from the north. "Out of sight! Move!" Redneck yelled. He forced me to the ground under the saltbush with the barrel of the Armalite.

The plane — I think it was a long

range Avion — ended once, lost height, touched down in a cloud of dust and ran 100 yards past us before stopping. Two men climbed out, moved about, stretched their legs and began lighting cigarettes. They were

short, dark-looking men. Indians, I thought.

Redneck was talking to his mate in a low voice. It sounded like German, or it could have been a Slavic language. Then he said something sharply like "Huck!" The crack of the two rifles came instantly and the men beside the plane spun around, fell and lay on the ground without movement.

"Christ!" I exploded to my feet, aghast, hardly believing my eyes.

"Hold it, pilot," Redneck said. "Unless you want to join them." His voice was cold, emotionless and his eyes were like those of a fish. Then he stepped an order to the other two. They walked casually to the Avion, dragged the dead man into the bush, came back and one of them climbed up into the machine and passed down three parcels to his mate on the ground. They lugged the parcels to my Cassia and stowed them behind the back seat.

"Nearly a million bucks in that lot," Redneck said casually. "And that's not peanuts, pilot. I can use you in this business. It's lucrative. Are you interested?"

I looked at him with all the



"You think she's ugly . . . take a look at mine!"

contempt I could muster. The horror of what I'd just seen was sinking in. Cold-blooded murder? Yet this man was so casual and off-handed about it as if either man's been potent nothing.

"Well?"

"My God," I burst out. "That was cold-blooded murder!"

"Not so," he rasped. "They double-crossed me in this business. It's an eye for an eye. Right?" He coughed, his head suddenly, lurching. It was another phase, coming in from the east this time — a Coonan I could tell that by its engine sound.

"Right — under cover! Move!" Badack yelled. Peering from under the awflood I watched the Coonan

the ground, the open, turned turtle and crashed into the Aster with a deafening explosion. There was a flicker of flame, then the patrol tanks burst with a roar. In seconds, both machines were engulfed in flame. The four of us stood on the landing strip. There was nothing to be done, could be done and the horror of it creaked like cold sweat on my spine.

"For your information, pilot," Badack said coldly, "that was your late predecessor. They tried to murder in on my business. That didn't last long. So be it."

Night came and the heat of day

take-off in the morning. I toyed with the idea of making a break for it in the dark but gave that away as another hare-brained scheme. There was only enough fuel in the tanks to reach the Darling River, and it was night.

I got up and walked about the landing strip. But my brain wouldn't work and my footsteps echoed loud in the still night air. I returned to the fire showering.

Badack said coldly, "Don't worry about what happened out there, pilot. Think of it as justice, rough but effective. Also bear in mind that the same thing could happen to you." There seemed to be no human feeling in his voice. I wondered if he was human.

The three of them lay down on the cold hard ground and slept, but they kept a tight hold on their rifles. The misery of the pain in my ankle and guts increased with the cold, while the ghosts out there under the smouldering embers kept closing in to hunt me. I kept getting up to replenish the fire or walk about. I couldn't rest. All that I could think about was the dead man and what was going to happen tomorrow.

Dawn was a glimmer in the east when I finally made up my mind. I'd been gone from the campfire for an hour now. No one had come looking for me. No one had called.

The night was still and silent as the shade of a wall. I was shivering with the cold and the fatigue of the Coonan was like ice when I put my hand on it. It was now or never. I climbed up into the cockpit slowly, painfully and my heart was pumping like a fire engine.

Would the engine fire first try? Would it get me into the air without a good warm up? Bad fear was a thing made my gut. The engine caught first up, coughed, spluttered, roared into life. Then I was charging down the runway, clawing for the sky. Ten minutes later I was able to breathe again.

Sometime after daylight I man-handled the three panels overhead. They fell, miles apart, on barren, God-forsaken country. God knows what the finder will think if they are ever discovered. How did they get there? Who owns them? What's in them? Perhaps time and the elements would deal with them.

I arrived back in Canberra late that afternoon unseen, unmarked as far as I'm aware. Perhaps I was lucky. Sometimes I wonder about those three men out there on the clapper, looking up at the sky, listening.

Perhaps I'd done better than even.

Ly-ee-Moon — the hoodoo ship

THE 1200-ton paddle-steamer vessel Ly-ee-Moon, built in England in 1932, had an accident-plagued life.

While engaged as a fast mail ship in the late 1930s, she was renamed and sent to Hong Kong Harbor. Ly-ee-Moon was raised and towed back to England for refitting, her paddlewheels being replaced by a propeller.

Two years later, she was almost gutted by fire at Fremantle (1939). But after an even more fearful rift she went into service on the Sydney to Melbourne run.

Then, on May 29, 1939, the hoodoo streak for the third and last time. The night was calm, the sea moderate, the visibility good. But just after 9 o'clock Ly-ee-Moon anchored on to the Green Cape reef within a couple of hundred yards of a powerful lighthouse.

Within a few minutes she had broken in two. The stern remained wedged on the reef while the forepart was washed towards shore.

There were 34 survivors. Ly-ee-Moon's hull, still attached to her bowing mast, killed the death of 32 passengers and crew.

The victims were buried on the cliff overlooking the scene of the tragedy.

Ly-ee-Moon Cemetery, with its white rock headstones, is still maintained by the Dept of Shipping and Transport and the National Trust. It is to the left of Green Cape Lighthouse, about 30 miles by road from Glenelg on the NSW south coast.

came in, feeling for the ground, then it touched and a dust cloud roared along behind as the machine slowed. It carried only one man, the pilot.

Beside me, the three high-powered rifles followed the slowing plane. I wanted desperately to spring up, rush out on the runway and yell to the fool to take off — get away before he crashed. Those other dead men up the bank. But I couldn't move. Fear and horror nailed me to the ground.

Something must have triggered a warning in the pilot's brain. The Coonan's engine roared suddenly to life, dust whirled madly behind the machine as it picked up speed, clawing frantically for the sky as it swept past us. Badack yelled "Huck!" and the three rifles exploded. I saw holes appear abruptly in the fuselage of the landing Coonan. The pilot jerked upright with his head flung back. I thought I heard a scream.

The Coonan heeled, a wingtip hit

was suddenly gone. A great heap of glowing embers marked the spot where the two planes had burned. The stench of burnt flesh, rubber and paint hung like a fog in the still air. We couldn't take off until daylight came. I had known that from the beginning.

I had to select the Coonan somewhere, either Bourke or Cobar, but neither place would be open until tomorrow. If I'd tried to make it tonight it would bring too much attention to ourselves. I had not filed a flight schedule before leaving Canberra — for obvious reasons — therefore we were instantly suspect.

We carried the food and water a good half-mile down the runway, in the dark. I built a fire and we cooked as best we could for light and warmth. The others ate but I couldn't. The very thought of food turned my stomach.

The Coonan was down at the end of the runway, fixed ready for a





SKI-SOLDIERS RAIDED RIVA'S EYES

A Nazi mountaintop strong-hold stopped the Allied advance through Northern Italy cold. So the skiing soldiers of the US Army's 10th Division were ordered up 4000 feet of straight-up hell in one of World War II's most suicidal attacks... **FACT / J. R. GODDARD**

THE FINEST TROOPS in the US Army were getting set for a 4000-foot climb straight up into death. They were men of the rugged 10th Mountain Infantry Division, newly arrived in a small, snow-covered valley in the Apennine Mountains of northern Italy. Broadsided in farmhouses on the valley floor on the night of February 18, 1945, they made last minute preparations for the ordeal.

Some of them ran patches

through their M-1 barrels. Others tentatively tucked the razor-sharp edges of ice axes and checked climbing gear. By midnight they would be clearing up the snow, icy face of Riva Ridge for a suicidal attack on Hitler's elite mountain troops — an attack regular GI units called suicide.

The US Fifth Army had damned good reason to want Riva knocked out. A high, forbidding pile of cliffs, spurs and ice-filled ravines running

down the west side of the valley, this natural fortress commanded a strategic mountain pass at its northern end. Baiting up on an east-west line just across that pass was bulky Mount Belvedere.

88 Ski Troops and the crack 23d Paratrooper Division which had tunneled into those mountains had dedicated their lives to holding the pass. The Fifth was equally determined to take it. For the pass led over into the great Po Valley — last



stronghold of Nazi forces in all southern Europe. Once the Po fell, all Italy would be free.

It was not Riva's firepower which held up the American advance. The Nazis had concentrated most of their force on more accessible Belvedere, where no amount of bombing or shelling could blast them loose. It was the eyes on Riva that made it one of the most dangerous enemy posts in all Europe.

Taking advantage of Riva's 3300 to 6000 ft height and panoramic view of the valley, the Nazis had strung a small garrison out in observation posts along its rocky top. Every time a tank-led GI attack headed up the valley Riva's eyes phased sector bearings over to the main fortress on Belvedere. Seconds later, withering 88 mm and mortar fire landed dead on US troops to

march past Sherman tanks parked uselessly along the roads. By 10 pm, whole battalions of men moved quietly westward through the mist with weapons, handlocks of ammo and coils of climbing rope slung over their ski parkies.

They were the cream of America's youth, these sinewy, skilled young mountaineers. But there was one thing not even two years of grueling training had given them — combat experience. With the confident look on their faces and the practiced way they moved across the snow it seemed unbelievable only a handful had seen real action. For until a few months before, the elite 10th had been the most unwanted outfit in the whole US Army.

Who needed them out in the Pacific jungles, they'd been asked in '43? And what possible good were

What really bothered Hays was the climb itself. He'd surveyed Riva's sheer cliffs and jagged rocks through his glasses. Climbing it was dangerous enough in daylight, worse yet in utter total darkness. But there was no other way to achieve surprise tomorrow morning.

"Go get 'em, boys," he said, trying to appear cheerful as his mountaineers swung by, "you can do it."

A spat of machinegun fire cut short his words. Hays ducked, listening to the sound echoing hollowly off Riva's stone face. A dull whining followed, punctuated by the shattering pop of a mortar shell exploding on the valley floor. Then all was silent. The Germans up top hadn't seen anything.

The firing made Hays even more tense. A seasoned soldier whose deep blue eyes showed all the hardship and haunting of 28 years of Army life, he no more wanted to send troops against bad odds now than he had as a lieutenant in World War I. There was no one fooling himself. Expert climbers or not, many of those men would be dead by morning.

The last of the white-clad men disappeared toward the little Dardagna River flowing near the base of the cliffs. From there, the ascent would begin in about an hour. Abruptly Hays retraced his steps to his HQ van hidden beyond a nearby village. Entering the van with its cheery stove, its tables and camp chairs, he found his senior officers waiting.

An aide spread a sector map out and the group crowded around. Big, gruff Brigadier General Robinson E. Duff, assistant division commander, stood next to Hays. Across from him was Brigadier General David L. Ruffner, an oldtimer from YMI and the outfit's peck military boss. Colonels commanding regiments and battalions completed the group.

Hays looked at his fellow officers and then announced flatly, "When we got here a few days ago, the Fifth Army looked on us as a bunch of hell-charging freaks. Now we're the single most important factor in the whole damned Italian war. If we knock out Riva by morning, we can hit Belvedere without artillery butchering us. And once Belvedere is gone, the Tenth will spearhead the drive right over into the Po!"

Several of the younger officers exchanged doubtful glances. Hays was a great soldier — Congressional Medal of Honor man — but he'd only been with the 10th a few months.

(Continued on page 40)

Each State has its own flag

EACH AUSTRALIAN STATE has its own flag, and each is based on the Blue Ensign.

Western Australia's badge is a black swan within a circle swimming to the right on a background of yellow. Tasmania has a red lion on a white circle, a device chosen in 1878. The New South Wales badge, adopted for the colonial flag in 1878, shows a golden lion on a red St George's cross within a white circle — at each extremity of the cross is a star.

The Queensland badge was adopted in the same year. It is a blue Maltese Cross with the Imperial Crown in the centre. In heraldic language the inscription would be, Argent on a Maltese Cross Azure the Queen's Crown Proper. Nobody knows who thought up the design or why the Maltese Cross was chosen.

The South Australian flag, which was adopted in 1904, carries the attractive State badge, a piping shrike — the white-backed magpie — with wings outstretched, on a yellow background.

The flag of each State Governor is the Union Jack with the State badge emblazoned in the centre, surmounted by a laurel wreath. The Governor-General's flag is a Union Jack, with a badge in the centre showing a seven-pointed gold star, a laurel wreath on each side, and an Imperial Crown above.

drive them back with heavy losses.

It was like a deadly football game with only one side helped by apolitics in the grandstand. No GI unit had been able to climb Riva's steep cliffs to destroy those posts.

Tought the situation just might finally change. A thick mist had come up to hide the valley from the all-seeing eyes above. This was the chance the daring, mountain-climbing 10th Division had waited for since joining the Fifth Army days before.

Troops of the outfit's 86th Regiment assembled gear and left the warm safety of their cottage. In the village tavern in the valley they belted down hot throat-searing shots of grappa, worked at voluptuous Italian barmacks, and strode away through black-out curtained doors.

Outside they fell into columns to

skiers on the beaches of Italy or Normandy later on? But when the US Fifth rolled north of Rome to bog down in the snowy Apennines, General Mark Clark had screamed for the 10th.

Now they were being thrown into a fantastically dangerous night climb — with hand-to-hand combat against seasoned Nazi mountaineers swarming them on Riva's top.

As the outfit crunched poorly along, a man in a brown parkie watched from the side of the trail. He was Major General George P. Hays, commander of the Screaming Tenth. He was as nervous as hell. Many of his troops were inexperienced fighters. All he could hope was that their training and earlier skirmishing with the Germans would stand them in good stead.

WHISPERED WORDS







WHISPERED WORDS

A quiet time
A little away from noisy traffic
and faceless people,
is when you'll find what we have here,
And it could be just round the corner –
It only takes a word in her ear . . .

A LOG OF FIGUREHEADS

With their spines flexed to follow the curve of the prow, their heads tilted to look perils in the face, one arm laid calmly at ease across the boom and the other at steadfast attention glued to the truncated thigh, the figureheads of high masted sailing ships reared proudly into battle and history . . .

FACT / E. R. YARHAM



ONE OF THE MOST potent symbols in Aboriginal mythology, the rainbow serpent, is the emblem for the Pacific Australia Direct Line's roll-on roll-off ships which come into service recently between Australia and the United States west coast.

The emblem is used as a badge on the ships' twin funnels and on the house flag as well as the ships' stationery. The serpent is shown coiled around its eggs, thus symbolizing a ship protecting its cargo.

Left
The figurehead of a cruiser belonged to the Danish cadet cargo vessel *Kobenhavn*. The ship also appeared in 1928 en route from Buenos Aires to Australia.

Below Left
The native figurehead of the *Deusa* sails with no doubt erected at the bow to inspire courage in the Indonesian trading ship's crew, and to command determination in the face of a storm.

Both the Argentine (below) and Colombian (below right) naval training ships have woman-styled figureheads. The *Libertad* has a most expressive figurehead of a woman with a long gown. She is flanked by two spotlights. The *Gloria* has a more austere figurehead of an angel and shield.



These days the traditional figurehead has largely gone out of fashion, but the Australia Direct Line's move is a reminder that ships are still beautiful objects worthy of variable adornment. A number of British liners carry large, decorative badges on their bows, a practice revived by the Orient Line with their first post-war ship *Crescent* in 1948.

Her badge of a harp was symbolic of the *Crescent* name. The *Crescent*, 1951, took her name from one of the Western Isles of Scotland, and had as her badge the target and broadsword. The practice was continued on the 41,000-ton *Oronsay*. The badge on her bows is a double E monogram symbolizing the two Elizabethan eras, surrounded by the letter O for *Orient* and topped with a formalized interpretation of an Elizabethan eight-arched peal crown.

The most notable instance of the re-introduction of figureheads is that of the Norwegian *Olsen Line*. The original *Fred Olsen* was captain of one of the great three-masted sailing schooners, but in 1908 the last of the *Olsen* sailing ships went out of service. With their departure went the artistic wooden sculptures that were fitted to every prow and which every schoolboy connects automatically and romantically with days when ships were powered by wind alone.

In 1936 the descendants of *Fred Olsen* decided to revive the old custom of decorating their ships with figureheads. They felt that this link with the days of sail should be renewed but they also hoped that this would give Norwegian sculptors the opportunity to display their art in ports round the world. In many instances it has been the ship's traffic route that has determined the figurehead.

Southern fronts and bows show that the vessel is destined for the Mediterranean.

Figures of girls typical of the various countries along the routes are a favorite subject, while others of a more mythological nature include *Scheherazade*, *Balkis* — the Arabic Queen of Sheba — and the birth of *Venus*. The figurehead of *Bergues* is a model of the French soldier and author *Cyrano de Bergerac*, celebrated for his huge nose, and *Banane* has the hideous head of a bear. The birth of *Venus*, against a 10-foot high shell, is the figurehead of the 34,000-ton *Bolette*.

This is cast in bronze as are most of the figureheads, but a few exceptions are in Byzantine Ravenna glass mosaic, which art designed to give the sparkling color of the Impressionists. The sculptor, *Grauf Bast*, introduced this idea. After tests for six winter months in northern waters on a section of the material welded to the ship at the waterline, it was found that *Bast's* mosaic would stand up to salt water, the pounding of the waves, winds, snow, sleet and ice. Although this form has a 2000 year tradition it has never before been used at sea.

The first of such designs, for the *Boisard*, 3640 tons, represents the French Impressionist painter, *Pierre Bonnard* (1867-1947) standing on a starred blue crescent, representing night, and behind him a color spectrum portraying the dawning day. The mosaic was assembled on a carved steel sheet, moulded to fit round the prow. Each of the 25,000 pieces of glass was fitted separately. The sculptor's aim was to imitate the pinpoint dots of color which are characteristic of the Impressionistic movement.

It is often said of a jack-in-the-box that he is a mere figurehead. But no artist could be more right where ships' figureheads are concerned, because in the days of sail they were the very symbols of direction.

There was a lot more in a

figurehead than a piece of carved and painted wood. For the origin of such embellishments are deep-rooted in religion, superstition, patriotism, irascible love of beauty and the sailor's fondness for his ship.

Their spines flamed to follow the curve of the prow, their heads tilted to look forth in the face, often with one arm laid calmly at ease across the bosom, the other at steadfast attention glued to the truncated thigh. Figureheads embodied the soul of a ship and the virtues essential to her crew.

They went out of fashion last century with the passing of sail, and their ends were various. Many were lost with their ships. Some were placed upright in churchyards near the scene of a disaster.

One unusual resting-place can be seen at *Thornion*, *Waltham* in *Yorkshire*, where the church locates in an old figurehead. The design is of an angel with two pairs of wings on an elongated bracket.

Some, by way of the bonkers' yards, have ordered a rusty propitiatory in seaside antique shops. Yet a few more stand sturdy-eyed as muscums, competing for public favor with the skeletons of a whale or a letter in the hand of *Nelson*.

Others seem to beckon the 20th century sailor to the haunts of the 19th century shellback, such as at *Scarborough*, *Yorkshire*, where the visitor can see a figurehead dated 1800 outside an old smugglers' haunt, the *Three Mariners Inn*, just behind the harbor front. On the south coast of England, overlooking the English Channel, the figurehead of a pirate now does duty as the sign of the *Crown and Anchor Inn*, *Shortham-on-Sea*, *Sussex*.

(Continued on page 56)

The Chilean steel-hulled ship, the *Generalbu*, has an awe-inspiring figurehead of a magnificent, long-pointed bird.



A DANGEROUS WAY TO FREEDOM

The ex-con had waited seven long years for the payoff — but the road to the pot of gold was fraught with treachery . . .

FICTION / HERB HILD

"GOOD LUCK," the wander said but Chuck Prelling didn't answer. Luck wasn't what he needed, only freedom. This he had finally — after seven years. He breathed deeply. Behind him the iron door of Parmarotta just slammed shut and Prelling winced as he heard the key jangling in the lock. No more locks, no more keys, he thought.

He had crossed the street halfway towards the taxi when he saw the driver shake his head. Prelling shrugged. What was there to him? After seven long years a few more minutes didn't matter.

"Chuck?" He looked around startled. The station wagon roared out from behind the taxi. The girl behind the wheel gestured vaguely with a gloved hand, as if she were embarrassed waving to a stranger.

Through Prelling's head went the faces of the girls he'd known before the State shied seven years off his life. Click . . . click . . . click . . . the faces passed before his inner eye like an old silent movie. Her face wasn't among them.

"Chuck?" This time it sounded more urgent.

He nodded and put his hand on the open window. "Do I know you?" His voice carried the coldness of the prison walls.

Her brown hair fell softly halfway over her face as she shook her head. "I'm Clancy's sister." Large brown eyes stared into his.

The flood gates of memory opened. Clancy had been his getaway driver in the robbery. They'd let him out after one-and-a-half years. At the time Prelling hadn't thought it was fair.

But after all, Clancy hadn't shot the security guard and knocked out the messenger carrying the money. All he'd done was drive the car, and even that hadn't been fast enough. Prelling's only luck had been that the guard didn't die.

No, he corrected himself, there was always the money. Seventy-three, that was the deal between him and Clancy. The thought of the \$40,000 had kept him going all those years.

"He never told me about you." A pretty face couldn't break open the hard shell the long years had formed. Prelling's voice was hostile. "Why



didn't Clancy come home?"

The girl shrugged. "He's gone."

"Come where?" Prelling went round the car and got in.

"He didn't say." She let the clutch in smoothly. For a while he watched her silently. Early twenties, he figured. He saw the movement of her firm legs as she shifted gears and felt the fire in his belly.

He checked himself immediately. After he had the money he could get any skirt he liked. His suspicion returned. For a while he watched through the back window, knowing



the cops had lost memories. They'd never see it his way — that after seven years the money was his — that he'd paid in full for his crime.

She stopped in front of a block of flats. "My place," she said. She was halfway out of the car, then turned and said, "Unless you've got some place to go to."

The struggle inside him was only brief. "No," he said, "I've got no place to go."

Up in her room all his suspicions returned. "Prove to me you're Clancy's sister," he said harshly. He

saw the cloud flicker across her face.

She went to the mantelpiece and pulled open a small box. "I don't really thank you for not trusting me." She held out a photo. "But Clancy did say you were all right."

The photo showed two kids in their teens. She was eager to recognize them Clancy. He handed it back. "What's your name?"

"Anne." Maybe it was the gentleness of her voice, maybe it was just the years of denial, but before he could stop it his shell of suspicion crumbled. His hands grabbed her,

pulling her close while his lips sought hers. She was strangely passive, but the years in a prison cell had blunted his senses and he didn't notice.

Later in the semi-darkness he asked, "Did Clancy ever tell you of our 70-30 split?" In the eerie light filtering through the half open blinds her huge shadow shook its head.

"I'll stick to the bargain," he said. "I'm no cheat. You got Clancy's share?"

"How come you trust me?"

"It's not a matter of trust. It's Clancy's share, not mine. I don't care

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if you blow the tea." Inside him the flame of passion heated again. His hands found her firm thighs. "Let's not talk about money now."

She didn't answer but her hands reached out.

When Prelling woke up, the sun coming in through the blinds printed strips of light along the floor. His watch showed it was almost 10 o'clock. His passion returning, he groped for the girl. When his hands felt nothing but the cool sheets, he became wide awake.

Peace threatened momentarily but he fought it down. There was nothing to worry about. She knew nothing. He felt a vague pain inside him at the thought that she mightn't come back.

He was almost dead when he heard the note. "I'll be back from work at 5.30," it said. He realized the prison routine had made him forget about life on the outside.

Prelling watched Anne's arrival from behind half-drawn blinds. She got out of the car with what looked like a bag of groceries. His eyes darted up and down the street. Nothing suspicious. Nobody following.

She was preparing tea when he asked her about her job. Routine office work for a firm of electrical supply merchants. "Pay any good?"

"It's a living." She shrugged.



"Now here's a dinner fit for a king . . . Here, King!"

"Got any sick days left?" She frowned. "Four—no, five—why?"

"You gotta take two, maybe three."

"Why?"

"You haven't earned your share."

Prelling complained the next word—"yet."

"How do I earn it," she asked in a husky voice, "and when?"

Prelling felt the yearning for her clutch him hard, but checked himself. Business first. "Take tomorrow off and the next day." He shrugged. "Maybe you oughta take 'em all. What's it matter. For 12 grand you can afford to quit that lousy job."

"It's not a lousy job," she said defiantly.

"Okay, okay, forget it."

She nodded. "I'd better ring one of the guys about taking a couple of days off." As her flat had no phone she went out after tea to make the call. "All fixed," she told Prelling after her return. "I and I'd be back in two or three days. Now, tell me whenever we going?"

"I'll tell you tomorrow," he said, putting her down.

They left early the next morning. Prelling drove carefully until they'd left the city behind, then he belted along. Watching the traffic on the highway through the narrow marsh, he realized it would be hard to check if somebody was following. It was just on nine o'clock when they passed through Goulburn. Apart from small talk neither spoke, though for different reasons.

Anne instinctively felt he had no cause to trust her fully. Why should he? He'd known her for only two days.

Prelling stared straight ahead. He could feel the tension rise inside him. Every turn of the wheels brought him closer to what he'd waited for for seven years.

An hour later they passed through the small farming town of Yass. Prelling wanted to stop for a cup of coffee but decided against it. People



"Miss Waterworth?"

Fast-swimming Banded Sea Snake

THE BANDED SEA SNAKE is a very fast swimmer and is sometimes found in great numbers in bays and estuaries. Frequently it is detected on land where it lies about rocks or under logs and heaps of debris.

There is a record of about 50 of these snakes being found congregated under a heap of palm-fronds about half a mile inland on Moore Island, New Guinea.

It is venomous, but like most sea snakes it is reluctant to bite — a habit which probably contributes to the low number of human casualties from its attack generally.

These species, also referred to as the Ringed Sea Snake, attains two feet in length, but also can grow to four feet.

Its upper surface is black, with several dark brown or reddish brown bands, and irregular and underbelly are yellowish. Its head is dark brown with yellow markings.

in small country towns had a way of remembering strangers. Good, solid citizens made the best witnesses in court.

He thought of the old lady who'd picked him out of an identification parade more than seven years ago. His lawyer had tried to shake her testimony with the old how-are-you-eyeglass bit, but she'd read the smallest print on the last chart right in front of the jury. And she'd winked him. Prelling looked his dry lips and drew on.

Anne looked up in surprise when Prelling took a sharp turn off the highway. BURNJUCK DAM — 19 MILES the sign read. After 18 more minutes on a narrow road they reached the wooded area of Burnjuck Waters Park. The road wound down through several S-curves. To their left they caught glimpses of the blue water of Lake Burnjuck.

Prelling stopped the car in front of the park administration building. The young receptionist smiled at him. Yes, they had several cabins available. Close to the lake? She thumbed through an index book, then nodded.

"How long would you want?"

"Two or three days," Prelling said. He signed the book as Mr. and Mrs. Bowen and gave a false but convincing Sydney address as their home. Best fishing? No trouble, the girl said. Not until the weekend. It was Tuesday. "We'll be gone by then," Prelling said.

Their cabin nestled among tall trees no more than 20 feet from where the sandy beach sloped down to the water's edge. Three boats rocked gently in the breeze.

"I'll take a look at the boat," Prelling said. "Give you a hand with unpacking afterwards."

"I can manage, thanks."

His boat was one of the three

Nothing fancy, 15-foot job with a medium-sized outboard motor. His eyes squinted against the sun rays that bounced off the dancing waves. Eight to 10 minutes it would take to get to the small island in the middle

of the lake, he figured. His hands itched to kick on the motor and take off.

He turned away, shaking his head. Not now, not even tonight. Tomorrow night. As he trudged back to the cabin his thoughts roamed. Not much had changed in those seven years. The trees had grown on the silent hills around the lake, a few more cabins had gone up.

When he got back Anne had made sandwiches and brewed up coffee. He inhaled the air and felt good. Afterwards they sat outside looking at the lake. In the cabin next door an elderly couple lazed in the afternoon sun. Two men arrived in a station wagon just as dusk began to close in. Minutes later they went down to the lake, shouldering fishing rods.

That night a cold wind whipped across the lake, but their burning bodies didn't feel its sting as they clung together in the darkness.

Prelling was too keyed up to sleep soundly. He awoke several times, and



"Somewhere along the way we pulled him."

every time he reached for the girl. It was as if only by feeling her firm body against his could he keep his mind off the money that was so close to his grasp. He dreamed the long hours of the next day.

The day dragged by with painful slowness. They went for a boat ride but Prelling kept well clear of the island. It was a cool day and only two other boats had ventured out on the lake. In one was a man and three boys, in the other the two men who'd arrived last night — they were fishing.

the silhouette of the wooded heights on both sides. He figured on rowing for about 10 minutes before starting the motor.

When he finally did start the motor, sweat was running down his face. He allowed himself a minute to catch his breath before going on. Prelling thought it unlikely that anybody would hear the motor at that hour of the night.

The girl hadn't spoken since they left shore. Now she was pointing to their left. Prelling turned the boat to the direction of her outstretched

arm. Prelling knew instinctively it wasn't the rustling of leaves, nor the lapping of waves against the island's rocky shore. A powerful light stabbed into his eyes.

The beam from Anne's flashlight followed the turn of her body. Its light was pale compared to the one directed at them, but strong enough to take in the scene.

The two men holding guns were very real. Prelling recognized them as the two guys posing as taxi anglers. The one holding the torch was short, stocky and bald. The other one was well over six feet tall but stooped as if he wanted to neutralize the difference between them.

The bald one wiped his glasses, forehead with the back of his heavy hand. "A long one it was," he said. "Not worth the trouble." The light beam played over the box at Prelling's feet.

"You bastards," Prelling said softly.

The tall one stepped forward but Baldy's voice stopped him. "Leave 'em alone for now. He's yours anyway. Get the gun's torch." He turned to Prelling. "Back to your digging. That hole's gotta be big enough for two."

They heard the girl's sharp intake of breath. "You... surely you're not going to kill us..."

Baldy nodded slowly. "We got no choice, kid."

Anne fought down a sob but the next one broke from her lips. Prelling poked up the spade and resumed digging. His moves were slow and deliberate but thoughts tumbled in his mind. Was there a way out? Could he make it to the waterline? Would they let her live if he got away? He tried but couldn't come up with the answers.

"Faster," said the fat man. Prelling felt bitter hatred well up inside. Thinking of the money had kept him going all those years. Now it was all for nothing. He'd end up with a bullet in his head. And the final irony was that he would be buried where the money had been hidden.

The spade was getting heavier as recognition began to weigh him down like a huge lid. For one brief moment he just wanted to be down in his own grave. His own grave — the thought suddenly came adrenaline pumping. The thump of his heart felt like the only living thing inside an empty shell.

In his mind every dull thump of the heart found an echo in the thought — fight — fight — fight.

(Continued on page 69)

Early challenge to Free Press

A CHALLENGE came to the Free Press in Australia early in the 1830s.

In 1824, William Charles Wentworth set up a newspaper, *The Australian*, in which people of liberal views strongly criticized the government, and published stories of the cruel way in which Governor Darling treated the convicts. They were constantly demanding self-government.

In 1827, Darling had two convicts discharged and publicly degraded with heavy physical punishment, for stealing away sheep in the hope of being discharged so that they could later enjoy the life of emancipates. One of them, Bullock, died several days later. Darling was so strongly attacked by newspapers that he tried to take away the freedom of the Press.

He put a tax of 4 pence a copy on newspapers, and forbade any to be published unless he gave them a license to do so.

But a great victory was won for the freedom of the Press, when Chief Justice Forbes declared the law was not consistent with the laws of England, and so must be disallowed.

In the afternoon, Anne went to the ranger's office to get a map of the area. She also asked for some small change. The phone box was just outside the office. She put in a coin and asked the operator to connect her with a Sydney number. "Hello," said a man's voice at the other end.

"Burrupuck Waters Park camp probably tonight," she said softly and hung up. When she got back she found Prelling lying on the bed smoking. His expression was intense, his eyes burned with an inner fire.

"Your work is almost over," she said gently.

"Yeah." He nodded absently.

They waited until darkness, then put together all the gear they'd need, a spade, two paddles and a flashlight. He set the alarm clock for 11:15 and turned off the light.

When the alarm went off, Prelling felt as if he'd slept only a few minutes. The girl stirred beside him. Ten minutes later they slipped out into the moonless night.

It was far too dark to see the island but he could dimly make out

arm. For a moment he thought the dark outline just ahead was the shore. Then he recognized the island.

Killing the motor, he let the boat drift towards it. He steered it to a cluster of bushes where he could sit it secretly. He grabbed a branch and felt the gentle bump as the boat struck ground.

This was it. This was the moment when he would claim what was rightfully his. Anne handed him flashlight and spade. He found the spot easily. During the long years in a prison cell the image of two shoulders had become etched in his mind, and so the cone yellow beam he now threw. Right foot to the right of the spade one was the spot.

"Here, hold this." He handed her the flashlight, measured out the distance and began to dig. He was about three feet down when he heard the tolling muffled sound — the box. He cleared the soil away frantically.

"Look," he said triumphantly. He dug some more soil away until he could grab the handle. As he heaved the box out of its hiding place he felt elation surge through him like an electric current.

A sound to their left made them



INDIA'S CULT OF BLACK MAGIC

Black magic has sometimes been dismissed as superstitious fantasy. But in India it is a belief adhered to with near religious fanaticism . . .

FACT / PAUL BROCK

THERE IS ONLY ONE COUNTRY in the world where black magic and miracles are accepted as absolute fact by practically the whole population. That country is India, and after spending 10 years there myself I am just as convinced as the natives that certain people have solved the problem of the supernatural.

Working in my office at Lucknow I had a chapman, or messenger, who was a martyr to chronic rheumatism. His hands, wrists, knees, and all his joints were so grossly enlarged and so painful that he was practically incapable of work. One day he hobbled up and begged my permission to remain at home for a few days, for the purpose of being cured of his agonizing disease.

I told him to take as much time off as he wanted and gave him a month's salary. "Let me see you when you come back," I said.

I was astonished when he returned in five days, smiling and happy, with his limbs as pliant and supple as my own.

"What happened?" I asked. "Why are you back so early?"

"By your favor, Sahib," he said. "I am perfectly cured."

"Are you certain of that?"

"Yes, Sahib, perfectly cured."

"Then tell me what medicine you took."

"I took no medicine. I called in two women, *madec* widows, doctors in magic from the bazaar. I gave them five rupees each and they cured me."

"But how? What did they do?"

"They put me on a charpoy (low bed) and crou sat at each side of me, and both passed their hands over my body so." He did his own hands over his body in long meandering passes. "Soon I was asleep, and I slept soundly. When I awoke I was free from rheumatism and am now perfectly well."

Neither the chapman or any other of the native workers regarded the incredible cure as a strange thing. They took it as a matter of course and explained to me that native practitioners in India frequently use a kind of hypnosis known as *the Phoonk* for the cure of rheumatism, which stays cured once the treatment has been given.

But though willing to make use of these mysterious powers for the benefit of the sick, there exists all over India abundant proof of the dread of "magic," or witchcraft, when it appears to threaten them with evil. If a farmer has transplanted his tobacco or some other crop, he collects old cracked earthen cooking pots and places a spot of limestone whiting on the blackened bottom of each. The pots are then fixed on stakes driven in the ground so that the white spots may be seen by everybody who passes.

This ward process is meant to neutralize the influence of the evil eye of the envious. It is believed that if a person gazes at the crop intently and curses it and the farmer with genuine hatred, the crop will fail. The white spots make it impossible for a man's gaze to be held in one place for longer than a second or two, and thus the evil influence flowing from the eyes into the crops is not strong enough to destroy.

The inhabitants of the mountainous regions east of Bengal, known as the *Bhootanas*, seem to be able to cure malaria by supernatural means.

When seized with fever in the low malarious tracts, which they must pass through on descending from the mountains to bathe in the holy Ganges, they collect leaves of the *Upas* tree, a stunted bush which grows in the foothills. These leaves are thrown in to a cauldron of boiling water to which the dung of a

holy cow has been added, and a *sadhu* or holy man is hard to utter incantations over the witch's brew. He does so for two whole days and nights, when the water is strained off, the residues dried in the sun, and then used as smoking tobacco in pipe or cigarette form.

After a few puffs of the smoke from this mysterious concoction the malarious patient begins to feel well again. The violent fluctuations in his temperature cease and he is able to eat a nourishing meal. Soon he is eager to give thanks to his gods.

What potent compound in the mixture guarded by the *sadhu* and his prayer is responsible for the cure? Chemists have tried to find out by analyzing the leaves of the *Upas* tree, but apart from detecting a mass of mild narcotics in their juices, no drug which might have a curative effect has been isolated. The mixture, exactly as the *Bhootanas* make it, has been tried on malarial patients in hospitals, but without the *sadhu's* incantations it doesn't work!

The wife of one of my workers, a big bony woman and the mother of a large family living within my compound was bitten by a "colubular man," or cobra, and quickly felt the deadly effects of its venom. When the woman was sinking rapidly, her friends came to my wife to ask that the evil surgeon might be sent for to save her life.

He came immediately and fought desperately to save the woman's life, but she died. Since he could do nothing further he came to report at my bungalow and while he was there a detachment of native workers came to us and asked that a *fakir*, or wandering leader, was passing through the village and it was known that he could cure snake-bite by charming it away.

(Continued on page 73)



NEVER TRUST A

It all seemed pretty easy sailing, and it paid well, too — but there had to be a slip-up somewhere along the way . . .

FICTION / ADRIAN KYNGDON

THE TWO MEN LOTTY showed into my office oddly matched. The smaller one was in his late 40s and running into fat. But I could see he was the one in charge.

He wore a grey lightweight suit that must have cost the best part of a hundred bucks, and kept his sunglasses on although my office was a bit on the dark side. "Modern, well-lighted office," the newspaper ad had said. What a joke.

His partner looked like a guy who was paid to do things with his hands. He was about six feet tall, my height, but had a lot more beef on his frame. I pegged him for an enforcer. Or something like it.

Normally I shake hands with potential clients. But they didn't

bother. Seated me first. Getting up, I looked past them into the big mirror by the door.

Looking at people's backs can tell you a lot. This time it didn't. No tell-tale outline of a shoulder holster on the big guy.

I turned to the other one and was about to do my what-can-I-do-for-her when the big guy took the right hand out of his pocket. The gun peering at me was a .32 S & W short-barrelled job, but it can make a real hole.

"No safe, no petty cash," I said, letting my hands rest on the desk so they could see them.

"Up," the big guy said, motioning with the gun. I threw another glance into the mirror while resting my hands on top of my head. My right

hand sneaked to the back of my collar.

A loose flick of my right wrist sent the knife swinging between them. It thudded into the door. You can condition yourself against all sorts of things but never against a real surprise. Both men turned with a reflex motion. It was all I needed.

Reaching across the desk, I pulled the gun arm hard towards me, then turned the wrist sharply outward. The guy yelled. He was stretched across my desk. I rabbit-punched him just at the base of the earlobe. He stopped yelling. I held onto the gun while he slipped off the desk like a ship down the launching ramp.

The fat man never moved. He had braced. His cheeks twisted into a smile. "Excellent work," he said. "Just the man we want." His accent was American or Canadian.

"Huh?"

He said, "You can put the gun away, it's not loaded."



MODEL!

"I know."

"You do?" The surprise showed in his eyes.

"The mirror," I said. "I saw the empty chamber. If he'd pulled the trigger, the empty chamber would've come up."

"Top marks again. Just what we want."

"You always use strong-arm stuff when you hire somebody?"

"Depends on the job. In your case it was a test."

"And I passed?"

"With flying colors." He flashed me a toothy smile.

I shrugged. "Mind telling me what it's all about?"

Just then the big guy stirred. He grunted, opened his eyes and began to rub the back of his neck. He got up and wedged his big frame into a chair, giving me a look like I was a dog that had just bitten him.

His boss told me his name was Reeves and his off-color's was Carl

Reeves said he represented somebody with a lot of money.

"Who's that?" I asked.

He said the guy's name was Smith, an American who wanted to be low for a while and needed protection.

"Smith, huh?"

"Yeah," Reeves nodded.

I asked how come Smith didn't stay in the States where he could hire all the strong-arm stuff he needed.

Too close to the action, Reeves said. Smith wouldn't last a week in the States. The guys that were after him would get the top-hot men in the Westing on his back.

"Why Australia?"

"Why not?" he countered.

I shrugged. "Okay. Why me?"

Reeves said he'd stopped around, mowed the field down to three, then had caught. He confessed what I'd already guessed — he'd heard about me from press reports of the Kary case. It had sounded impressive in the newspapers.

Naturally I never told anybody how easy it had been. Police in all States of Australia had been looking for the Kary girl after her old man, a banker, had got the ransom note.

An old crim who owed me a favor gave me a hot tip. I got the girl back and split the \$10,000 reward 60-40 with the old guy who'd tipped me off. I reckoned the 4000 bucks kept him on the right side of the law for a while.

Yes, it had been a good year for the Talen detective agency. Gave me a break from handling divorce cases.

Normally I take my fee. This time I decided to play it the other way around. So I asked:

"We'll hire you for a month initially," Reeves said. "Five grand plus expenses."

I never battled an eyelid. Like I was getting offers like that every day. He had it all on the line. There was more to it than just the protecting.

It was my job to find a place for Smith. Out somewhere in the country. With a high fence around and a bunch of vicious dogs guarding the place. Not too far from Sydney. Oh yeah, and a swimming pool because Smith loved to swim.

Reeves saw my raised eyebrows. "Money's no object."

"Just as well," I muttered.



After they'd gone I called on Lotty. She looked very sexy despite the horn-rimmed glasses. I told her I'd have to go away for a month or so and she'd have to run the office on her own. "No new clients for a month," I said.

Her brows knitted. "You come into money or something, Mr Tolan?"

"You get paid, don't worry," I said. "Just think of all the crosswords you can do while I'm away." Lotty loved doing crosswords.

She shrugged. "Okay, Mr Tolan, it's your business."

I figured the Blue Mountains would be ideal for what Smith had in mind. I got in touch with several real estate agents in the area. They showed me around, but it wasn't easy to fulfil Reeves' conditions.

On the fourth day I struck pay dirt. I was shown a brick house on a two-acre block of land. The house was perched on top of a one-mile long ridge and had a 50-square-metre swimming pool.

On one side the ground sloped down to the parking area of a motel.



"I can't find my life jacket!"

On the other side it fell gently to a paddock which further down merged with a wooden area which, the agent said, was leased to some Scout outfit.

I did a quick mental check of the place. As it was situated higher than the surrounding countryside there'd be no danger from a sniper. With a fence around and some dogs on the loose day and night only a tank could break into the place.

The next three days were busy for

me. As the place was already vacant there was no problem with the alterations. While a local contractor put up the wire fences, one around the outside, one around the pool to keep the dogs out, I worked out to some nearby branches with four vicious Dobermanns. Finally, after a week, I called Reeves that everything was ready.

Two days later they arrived at Sydney airport. I almost overlooked Reeves and Carl, because of the girl just ahead of them. She looked like Sophia Loren must have looked a few years ago.

With her was a guy about 50 only, just her height. He had long, grey hair, sideburns that came down to the bridge of the jaw. His eyes were hidden behind dark glasses.

I guessed this was Smith, also who knows. It was none of my business. My job was to keep him alive for a month. For five grand. My left arm got felt the hardness of the 32 automatic. Inside the back of my collar was the leather sheath holding the second throwing knife. I'd try my best.

I greeted towards them, watching the crowd. Nothing suspicious. Smith didn't shake hands when we were introduced. Five grand, I told myself. Let it ride. The girl's smile was faint and non-committal. Mr Smith's secretary, Reeves said. Miss Gane, I was to address her.

Smith frowned when he saw the taxi pull up. No doubt he was used to riding in a chauffeur-driven limousine. Reeves turned to me, but I got in first. I know how that would work. "If he wants protection he's got to play it my way," I said. "I'll follow the taxi in my car."

I noticed the taxi made two flickered across Gane's face. I gave the cabbie the address and we left. I passed the taxi half a mile before we arrived. About 400 metres from the gate I stopped and waved the taxi to a stop.



"To put it in Leppien's terms, Reedwood—LET US PRAY."

Those days of chaff and horses

TODAY'S FARMERS, who need only fill up their tractors with petrol and zoom off, have little comprehension of the trials their predecessors faced. In the old days, welfare of draft horses, often affectionately referred to as the Labor Party, was of paramount importance. It was not enough for the animals to graze in the paddocks. They had to have chaff and this could not be bought in sacks as it was too costly.

So the long grass growing along the gullies was cut with a scyph hook, bundled up and hauled in on a sled — often simply the large fork of a tree with boards nailed across to form a platform.

The grass was then fed through a manually turned chaff cutter. Farmer's children could be seen often taking their turn at the machine until their parents became impatient enough to get a stationary petrol engine to turn the chaff cutter.

"Pay him," I said to Reeves. When the cub had left I said, "No need for him to get a look at the place." I could tell Smith didn't like the upland walk. Again I saw that random smile on the girl's face. Reeves looked embarrassed. Carl plopped stupidly.

The dogs came bounding to the gate with bared teeth. It was time for my little lecture. "See the enclosure around the swimming pool? From it two doors lead into the house. These are the only doors you will use when I'm not around. Don't ever step into the main yard. They'll tear you apart."

The dogs growled menacingly. Everybody was impressed. I called the dogs off and we entered. As we walked around inside the house, Smith nodded approvingly.

"Who's staying?" I asked.

"Mr. Smith, Miss Guss and Carl," said Reeves. "I'm leaving tomorrow."

I nodded. "Okay. On your way call on my bank. I'll phone them tomorrow afternoon. If you haven't deposited half of the money I'll walk out of here tomorrow night with the dogs."

Reeves gave Smith a questioning look. Smith nodded. "Agreed."

I'd been through the house earlier and had decided who'd sleep where. While I showed them around I led down my rules. Miss Guss's room was at the end of the corridor, next to her would be Smith's and next to him Carl's.

"Where will you be?" Smith asked.

"My room is next to the entrance," I said. "I'll sleep during the day."

"The day?" he asked.

"Yeah. I'll be up on the roof at night." The house had a flat roof, ideal for overlooking the surroundings.

I turned to Carl. "You stay close

to your boss. If he is in his room, you sit outside. If he takes a swim in the pool, you sit by the poolside."

I turned to face the others. "Write down all you need for one week. Food, drink, newspapers and whatever else you want. I'll phone the order through. . . my eyes roamed on the girl for a moment. . . I'll be the only one to use the phone. If it

rings while I'm asleep, get me up. Don't answer it yourself."

"This whole living is a jail," Smith said.

"You ever been in jail?" He didn't answer, so I said, "Anyway, it's only for a month."

Reeves left the next morning and we settled down to a month of doing nothing. Except waiting for something to happen. Or rather, for nothing to happen.

It was on the fourth night up on the roof when I heard the first scripping on the trapdoor. My right hand released the safety catch on the gun, my left pushed the bolt.

"I need some fresh air," Guss whispered. "I can't sleep."

I stepped aside without answering, sliding the bolt back into lock position.

"You got a cigarette?" She sat down on my featherbed mattress.

"I don't smoke," I said.

"I forgot, you're on duty," she said sarcastically.

"Smith knows you're up here?"

"I hope not." Her voice made my heart thump.

(Continued on page 11)



"Mr. Mr., I hardly know where to begin!"

The steamer Waratah displaced 9,339 tons and had 211 souls on board at the time she disappeared from the face of the earth, leaving not a clue to her fate



MYSTERY OF THE WARATAH

Sea folk-lore abounds with strange tales and legends. The mystery of the steamer Waratah's disappearance ranks as one of the most fascinating and perplexing ... **FACT / TREVOR SANDERS**

EARLY ON THE MORNING of July 27, 1909, the tramp steamer Clan MacIntyre was about 10 hours out of Durban, South Africa, heading west-wards for the port of East London, when she sighted a large steamer behind her. The newcomer soon overhauled the tramp, and the two ships conversed by signal.

"What ship?" signalled the Clan MacIntyre.

"Waratah, for London," the steamer replied.

"Clan MacIntyre, for East London," responded the tramp. "What weather did you have from Australia?"

"Strong south-westerly to south-

ely winds, across," said the Waratah.

"Thanks. Goodbye. Pleasant passage," signalled the Clan MacIntyre.

"Thanks. Same to you Good-bye," ended the Waratah.

The Waratah drew level with the Clan MacIntyre and parted her, and by 9-10 she had drawn away out of sight. In spite of Clan MacIntyre's salutation, the Waratah did not have a pleasant passage. She was on her last voyage. She never completed it.

Once the Waratah's masts slid from view below the horizon and the last dark smudge of her smoke faded from the sight of the Clan MacIntyre, she was never seen again. The

light-hearted exchange of signals with the tramp that morning was the world's last contact with the 9,339-ton steamer and the 211 souls on board her.

The Clan MacIntyre ploughed on in the Waratah's wake, and later that day she ran into a strong south-westerly gale near the Cape of Good Hope. The tramp had to put her bows to a tempestuous sea, and hurricane-force winds howled across her out of a black sky. Local sailors later said the storm was the worst in living memory for the region.

The Waratah was due to put in to Cape Town on July 29. At first when she failed to arrive on schedule,

HMS Herald, one of the many ships which took part in the fruitless search for the Waratah



there was little alarm. It was presumed that she had taken it easy on the storm for the sake of her passengers' comfort.

But the days ran on and she failed to make her appearance. Other ships arrived at Cape Town which had left Durban after her, and they could give no news of her. People started to feel anxious.

But she was a big, modern ship. Smaller ships like the *Clan MacIntyre* had weathered the storm and made port, so surely she could not have come to much harm. Officials began to suggest that mechanical breakdowns could have led to the delay.

Doubts began to grow in the insurance world of London, where thousands of pounds from the underwriters were at stake. One insurance company official gave a convincing interview to the *Press* on August 4.

"Were the *Waratah* a low-line steamer, not the same concern would be felt for her safety," he said. "But for a twin-screw liner of over 9000 tons, built by a first-class firm last year, and sailing under good ownership, to be several days overdue is, of course, an unusual event. An underwriter could scarcely have wished for a better risk when the *Waratah* left Australia."

At that time the shipping world was still hoping for the *Waratah* to bump belatedly into a South African port with a story about an engine breakdown. But after a few more days of mounting concern a tug was sent out to search for her, and

shortly afterwards the Admiralty directed the cruiser HMS *Porto* and HMS *Pandora* to assist her. Later HMS *Hermes* joined them.

Their search proved fruitless. It was as if the steamer had passed intact through a hole in time and space into another world. If she was still afloat she should have been sighted by one of the searching ships or by one of the merchantmen passing through the area. If she had sunk there should have been some trace of her fate left on the surface — boats with survivors, or at least wreckage and dead bodies.

Anxiety grew around the world as the days passed. All the churches in Melbourne held special services with hymns and prayers for the *Waratah*'s passengers. Theories were evolved to explain how the steamer might have broken down and drifted far southwards or eastwards. But none of this helped the search.

On August 10 HMS *Pandora* arrived back at Durban to report that she had drawn a blank. Her search had covered an area 350 miles by 300 miles to the south of East London, and she had had to battle through extremely heavy gales. Her captain declared that if the *Waratah* was still afloat one of the searching cruises could not have helped but sight her.

In the meantime, other details which appeared to relate to the *Waratah*'s voyage past the South African coast had come to light. Two other ships each reported sighting a vessel on the night of July 27 which

might have been the missing liner.

At 6 pm on July 27, 12 hours after the *Waratah* was first sighted from the *Clan MacIntyre*, the small freighter *Harlow* was steaming north-east along the South African coast about two miles from the shore. *Harlow*'s captain and mate saw the smoke of another ship on the horizon — so much smoke, in fact, that they thought the ship might have been on fire.

When darkness fell they saw a ship's lights in the same direction. Then the lights appeared to be coming up behind them. But a couple of hours later they saw two bright flaring lights suddenly appear astern. They might have been bath-lamp ashore, or they might have been explosions. At any rate, the lights of the other ship were no longer to be seen.

At about 9.30 pm the same night the Union Castle liner *Gaulph* was near East London when the officer of the watch sighted a large ship about five miles away. He flashed the *Gaulph*'s name as a signal, and the other ship flashed a word back which he could not read. The last letters of it appeared to be T.A.H.

But the evidence of both the *Harlow* and the *Gaulph* was inconclusive. If the ship seen by the *Harlow* was the *Waratah* she must have been heading back to Durban for some reason. If the *Gaulph*'s ship was the missing liner, on the other hand, she could only have covered about 70 miles since she sighted the *Clan MacIntyre* 15 hours previously.

In either case, she would almost certainly have been sighted in the area during the day by some other passing ship.

So it finally appeared that the Waratah had been steaming safely along her correct course when she passed the Glen Macleayre that morning. Then, during the few hours after she vanished over the horizon from the latter, some terrible accident sent her swiftly to the bottom of the sea.

Nobody could say what had caused her loss, because no ship found any wreckage from her — none, at least, that could be positively identified. The steamers Tottenham and Inawza both reported seeing bodies floating in the sea off East London, but neither ship recovered any of them. A Govern-

ment, which left the Cape on September 11 and searched for three months, covering more than 14,000 miles.

By the time the Sakine started her search, the Admiralty had already given up. On August 23 they ordered Haines, Pandore and Fort to return to the Cape. One by one the other searching ships drew blanks, until by the end of the year the Waratah had been generally given up for lost.

Then, with no evidence as to her fate, rumor and legend took over her story. Various people came forward and claimed that she was unworthy, that she had too much top hamper, that she had stacked too much deck cargo, that she was poorly-built, that she was unhandy in a seaway, that her boats were rotten. Most of these stories were untrue

provided her specifications. She was designed for the Australian run, and especially for the emigrant traffic. She was nominally a mixed passenger-cargo ship, but cabins could be erected in her hold so that more passengers could be carried instead of freight.

The Waratah was a good-built, twin-screw ship, 465 feet long with a beam of 59 feet and a draught of 32 feet. When completed she had a registered gross tonnage of 9139. At full load she displaced about 14,000 tons — as much as most of the battleships of her day. Reciprocating engines gave her a normal speed of 13 knots.

Her cabins were comfortably fitted out for her passengers, and her safety precautions were thorough. She carried 16 lifeboats, a seabeam three lifts which could hold 100 people between them, and 930 lifebelts. The only possible modern safety refinement she lacked was wireless — but in 1909 this was nothing out of the ordinary.

The Waratah was completed in October, 1908, and was classed as "100 A1" by Lloyds of London. After inspection by the Board of Trade and the Emigration Authorities, she started out on her maiden voyage to Australia carrying 67 cabin passengers and 489 emigrants. Her commander was Captain Herry, the commodore of the Blue Anchor fleet.

On November 5, 1908, she sailed from England on her maiden voyage for Australia. She carried a full complement of emigrants and cabin passengers for Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney. Apart from some minor difficulties, the voyage passed without incident.

The Waratah left London for her second voyage on April 27, 1909. She had a calm passage to Australia and arrived without any mishap. In the Australian ports she landed 32 cabin passengers and 193 emigrants and took aboard a 6500-ton cargo of food concentrates and agricultural produce in her reconstructed holds. She left Adelaide on July 7, 1909, and made Durban on July 25.

In Durban she took aboard another 248 tons of cargo, and the crew coaled ship. Then, carrying 92 passengers and 119 officers and men, she put to sea for Cape Town on July 26. The next day she passed the Glen Macleayre and then vanished forever.

The Board of Trade inquiry ran for two months, collecting a great mass of information and dispelling many of the wilder and sillier rumors about the liner and her probable fate.

(Continued on page 789)

Early Australian housing horrors

MOST OF AUSTRALIA'S early housing was of a low standard. Some critics might maintain it still is.

When Governor Macquarie arrived in New South Wales, he found "public buildings in a state of dilapidation, and requiring to decay". Most of the houses were rough wooden huts.

Helped by Francis Greenway, an ex-convict architect, Macquarie had stone public buildings built and encouraged the citizens to build business premises and houses of stone. However, flimsy housing long remained common in town and country.

In 1820, a professor wrote: "Nowhere, perhaps, except in Australia, could be seen collections of such hasty erected huts and small habitations, in every case belonging to, and built by, those who inhabit them". In the country, apartment houses were at first mere huts of bark on a frame of saplings, the whole tied together with greenhide. On the goldfields it was worse.

The slab-hut house was an improvement. It consisted of either two rooms or one large one partitioned by saloon or beams. A veranda and a kitchen might be added, and other rooms as needed. Otherwise, the kitchen was a rough shelter a small distance from the house or a separate building connected by a covered way.

ment tug which was sent to search the area found that a large quantity of whale blubber had been dumped thereabouts. This may have been what the consumers saw.

By now, hope was fast fading for the lives of those on board the missing liner. Optimistic suggestions were made that she might be dashed and still drifting, and the lack of wreckage gave some support to this theory. So the search went on.

The three British cruisers from the Cape combed hundreds of square miles of empty sea for several weeks. The Australian Government paid the charter of another steamer, the Severn, which hunted across the southern ocean for a month. And the Blue Anchor line, the Waratah's owners, chartered the steamer

and unfounded. Even worse were the methods of the merchant seamen. In the year after the Waratah vanished five messages in bottles which were supposed to have been dropped overboard from her were found, mostly on the Australian coast. Not one was found to be genuine.

Finally, on December 16, 1910, nearly a year and a half after the Waratah vanished, the Board of Trade inquiry into the disaster opened in London. Before a panel of experienced assessors, including an admiral and a naval architect, the Waratah's whole history was reviewed.

The Waratah had been built at Whitburn, Scotland, by the reputable firm of Barclay Curle in 1908. Her owners, the Blue Anchor Line,





ALL'S FAIR— BETWEEN THIEVES

The robbery had been a cool-cut, easy one — but Carn hadn't bargained on a second partner . . . FICTION / ALEXANDER TAIT

CARN SMUNG the new Holden into one of the parking bays, letting it drift to rest against the kerbside. For a while he sat with the ignition still on, half transfixed by the windscreen wipers as they swept the water across the glass. Something in the wipers still tickled as it cooled, while the pellets of water appeared again as soon as the wiper had cleared an arc.

He was barely conscious of the rain drumming on the roof. All he could feel was a slow lead weight dragging him down to sleep. He passed a hand across his face and rubbed the knuckles into his eyes. It didn't make much difference, so he tried shifting in his seat. Still he could not squeeze out the tiredness.

Reaching forward, he turned off the wipers. Through the screen he could not guess the path, a wall and beyond that, shadows reaching into the black pool he knew was the waters of the bay. On his left some bushes danced in the wind. A few lights shone across the other side of the water. Small, insignificant lights which seemed to move in the swirling rain.

A car passed by behind him, its headlights momentarily lighting up the interior of his car. It passed on up the empty floodlit street, sending a low spray out across the tarmac. The eyes gradually recovered their night sight in the shadows.

He thought about getting out to stretch his legs, but he got no further than that. His hands rested limply at his side. He just wished he had left that damned club earlier to start the long drive back up the coast to Brisbane. But he had had to stay there and now he had to wait even longer.

Lifting his wrist, he glanced down at the heavy door's watch. Damn. Nearly two o'clock. And still in Sydney.

The beer and the whisky which he had poured down on top of the beer had mixed into a headache formula. His eyelids persisted in drooping and his head kept falling to one side against the door but he forced himself awake, hoping the dizziness and nausea would soon pass to enable his driving further.

He heard them first. Feet pounding along the paving stones. Then, noise as a blur through the screen, he saw them. Two, no, three men, running along the path towards him. Without moving, he watched them.

One of them was out in front. Perhaps two or three yards only ahead of the other two. He looked back to see how far the other two were behind him and as he did so his side brushed the wall, throwing him off step. The other two moved apart as he stumbled.

The fugitive slowly shook his head as his two pursuers moved to either side of him. Carn was out of the car as they started hitting the man.

One of them turned and saw Carn. He yelled something at his friend, looked the fugitive in the side and turned to make off. The second man turned to meet Carn. He was big and Carn was already beginning to regret his move.

They moved slowly in front of one another until Carn swung out his fist. It grazed the man's cheek. Before he could draw it back for another go, something heavy and hard was brought down across the back of his head.

At first he couldn't understand it. Why, if he was in bed, was he so wet?

He moved in the sudden sheets. Then the pain shot through his head so that he winced and had to stop moving. He may have drifted off to sleep then for a short while, but he wasn't sure. His dreams fragmented then returned. And the pain. His head still ached whenever he tried to move.

He would have liked to stay in that position forever if he hadn't felt himself shaking. His body ached as he descended. Water poured down his chest into his lungs. He gagged and coughed and forced his way through the pain to move.

The rain streamed down on to his face, turning the blood which oozed from his scalp. A thin red stain worked in the rainwater his body made by lying across the gutter.

Pushing himself to a sitting position, he looked around. His car was still parked in the berth, the door wide open as he had left it. Turning, he looked behind him. A body lay slumped against the wall.

When he reached it, he turned it over.

The face was puffed and covered in blood. The eyes were open and staring up into the dark, wet night. When he passed his arm under the shoulder to lift the man, the head flopped back and to one side, too far for his liking. Carn lay the corpse back on the stone.

The furthest suitcase lay wide open and was spread out like a pair of wings. Like the man settled to the pale skin of the floor, the material of the coat stuck to the path. Underneath the man had on a tunic, cheap jacket, a light checked shirt, tin slacks and brogue shoes. They all looked as if they had come from the same bargain basement. Carn stood



"The vote, then, is 3 to 1 IN FAVOR of cannibalism!"

up. The knock against the back of his head was probably only slight but it jured through his skull, splitting it apart with the pain. He turned his head slowly and then stopped when he felt the cold metal flat against his cheek.

He didn't see it. He didn't have to. He knew it was the barrel of a gun. What sort didn't matter.

"Get into the car, mate. Your car, and fast."

The voice might have come from another world. Carn knew better. The deep, slow accent and the "matey" bit, meant that he was a native and not from the top of the hill either.

They walked to the car and Carn got into the driver's seat. There was someone already sitting in the front passenger seat. It was the man who had yelled and run. Carn tried to work out whether he was Italian or Greek. It didn't really matter and he didn't really care. They were all alike to him, so he decided that the man was Greek. He also decided to wipe that wide, peary smile from that dark face as soon as he had a chance.

The man with the gun climbed into the back of the car. He settled himself with a grunt and the car bounced. Then he slammed the door shut.

"Up the street," the man growled.

Carn started the car and reversed back into the wide highway, then changing gear, they left the corpse without a comment.

In a second floor front window across the street, an old woman who suffered with insomnia tut tutted to herself as she let the heavy curtain fall back into place. She held the Queensland registration number in her hand as she felt her way slowly across the darkened room to the light switch. With the light on, she stepped

swiftly over to the phone and started dialing.

"Mind telling me where I'm chauffeur'ing you to?" Carn asked.

The Greek and nothing Carn looked in the mirror at the second man. They were heading down William Street when the man in the rear seat muttered, "Make for the bridge, cross it and then follow the coast road."

They drove for another 25 minutes without a word.

Carn was lost by the time he was told to pull over and stop. Matey got out first, Carn second and then the Greek. The headlights lit up the road

ahead. Otherwise it was dark and it was still raining.

"Cross the road over there and down the steps. And let me tell you that it would help if you tried to run, because then," he started smiling and lifted the gun to Carn's chin, "then, I can get rid of you."

"Well, why don't we anyway, Greber?" asked the Greek in his sing-song accent.

"Pleased to meet you, Greber," said Carn with the ghost of a smile. He didn't feel pleased or like smiling either, but he had to do something to get the creeping fear out of his guts. His bravery had left him, so too had the high feeling which came from the drink. At the moment he was just concentrating on keeping his legs from buckling beneath him.

Greber turned slowly on the Greek.

"You olive-eating immigrants ain't got a bloody bit of sense," he muttered. "You'd feed sweets to a cow, you stupid bastards."

"Well, he won't get anywhere to tell anyone your name," whined the Greek.

Greber said nothing as he poked Carn in the spine to get him moving.

It was even darker on the other side of the road. They walked back along it for a few yards until they came to a white post beside an old wooden gate. Greber reached into the letter box and drew out a piece of paper. He had trouble reading it and



"PE go first, man — it may be a dirty conchise plot!"

had to lift it closer to his eyes.

Carey swung his hat into the Greek's stomach. The Greek gave out a stifled squeak before bending his knees to drop. Carey looked surprised as Carey brought his hand back across into the side of Carey's face.

Without waiting to see how either of them were, he turned and ran.

The piece of paper was lying on the road near the white post. Carey stooped to pick it up. It sagged in his hand and he had to carefully spread the limp paper to avoid tearing it.

The words were a blur, the rain having dissolved the letters into a meaningless mess. Only two short lines had been written. In fresh Indian ink with a fountain pen he guessed. Carefully he pulled back one folded corner. He could make out the letters HUR in the first word before he came to where the rest had been open to the rain.

He dropped the scrap of paper to the road and looked about.

There was not much to see. The rain pattered on to his shoulders and coursed through his hair, down his face and neck. A trickle ran down his back. He could hear the rain falling onto the bushes and trees in a continuous rush all around him.

It was a warm night, even with the rain. He vaguely wondered if the clouds would ever clear. It had been the same for four days. The weather man said — He shook his head to wake himself up.

He hadn't run far down the road before he realized that he was heading in the wrong direction for the car. But then it was too late. He'd paused for a moment to hear steps coming after him. Only one of them was following him he was sure, but they both had guns so one was enough. From there he had run until the breath ripped down his hot throat. Then he had hidden in a bush to wait.



"You walked your calm quiet avenue, your keen attention to detail, and general efficiency, Louie — what are you trying to do, make me look stupid to the clients?"

They never came. He should have known it. There was no point in their chasing him. They would never be able to catch him because they would never be able to see him. He had trouble seeing the badge across the other side of the road.

After waiting in the bush for half an hour he slowly made his way back to the car. But it was gone and so

had they. The night seemed to close in on him as he stood wondering what to do.

The steps. That was the only way. He looked down. There was nothing to see. Warily, he started down them. There were many of them and after every seven or so the path would run in a gentle slope for a few yards before the next lot of steps.

The last flight left him on the edge of a lawn. Across the grass a house nestled in the shelter of the overhanging bushes and trees. "They could not see a searchlight down here and nothing would be seen from the top," he thought.

It was a long, low, new house made of brick and varnished timber. A light shone on the porch above the front door and another light showed from one of the wide windows to the left. The light only illuminated the frame as it filtered through an orange, beanie-type curtain. The light on the porch made a narrow, clear path of light right across the lawn.

A murmur of voices drifted from

Largest sand island in the world

FRASER ISLAND, five miles off the Queensland coast near Maryborough, is the largest island on Australia's east coast and is claimed to be the biggest sand island in the world.

It is 35 miles long, averages 50 miles in width and contains 350,000 acres. Incoming swells rise to 500 feet and tower over 40 feet water takes, some more than 200 feet deep.

Vegetation ranges from mannafruit and stands of hardwood to flowering shrubs and ground orchids.

Dragons and wallabies are plentiful but there are no kangaroos. Emu-birds have multiplied to an estimated 2500 head. Birdlife shows a great variety including the rare grassland parrot.

Many a ship has come to grief on the island and several wrecks can still be seen.

the house to play with the mother of the surf from the sea. He waited and waited for a while before he ran over to the porch.

The house and its gardens were well kept by hired help, judging from the size of it, Cam guessed. Quietly he edged along the criny paving path, which ran alongside the wall of the house, until he was at the window. The voices were louder but still he could not make out what they were saying. Then he realized there was a woman in the room as well.

"Why don't you come in out of the rain?"

Creber walked slowly across the lawn from the shadows only a few feet from where Cam had been standing. He carried a rolled umbrella in one hand and his gun in the other. The barrel was pointing at Cam's chest. Creber didn't look very wet.

"Didn't really need this," Creber said, indicating the umbrella. "They always look pansyish anyway."

Cam stood wishing he had walked home.

"They got a sort of open-air table

Instant nests for the hardy crew

A FEATURE OF THE telegraph lines crossing the Victorian plains is the wire baskets attached to the cross poles on the poles.

Trains were ruthlessly used down but the black crew was by no means on his way to extinction. Not able to find time to do their breeding in, the birds turned to the telegraph poles and soon had their clumsy habits interfering with transmission.

Some technicians thought of wire baskets to provide the crows with a nesting place away from trees and roadsides.

Through generous suggestions of men and his works, the crows have really taken to the baskets and few are unrecognized in the breeding season.

thing back there," continued Creber, vaguely indicating the shadows behind him. "Big colored umbrella and all. Dry and comfortable. The blocks I work for likes to be comfortable. And he likes his privacy. Normally he'd get mad at a trespasser, but somehow I think he'll be glad you dropped in."

Creber opened the door, he stepped back, waving the gun.

"Come on in," he said.

"I have phoned for the cops," Cam said.

"I suppose it was worth a try," answered the flood-faced man. "In your position I suppose anything is worth a try. As you proved by your reckless but successful escape earlier."

"In a short time you'll see I'm right."

"Look, I don't for one moment believe that the police have been contacted. You don't want them busting in any more than I do and if they did call, well, one thing they won't find is you."

The flood-faced man sighed like an old, tired engine having trouble making its way along the tracks. He pushed himself to his feet and slowly walked across the room.

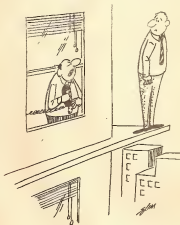
At the door he turned and said, "If you would just excuse me for a moment while I just call a friend and make sure that they are ignorant of your whereabouts."

Cam remained standing in the middle of the room and then, because he was tired of standing, he lowered himself into one of the easy chairs. No one objected. Not one of the three other people in the room even seemed to care. They all looked as if they had stayed up too late.

Creber was slumped on a hard wooden chair near the door. His shadow rested on his knees and between glancing at Cam he stared down at his scuffed black shoes.

Another man walked over to the drink box and mixed himself a drink. He didn't ask if anyone else wanted one. He was wearing a slim black suit with matching patent leather shoes. The handkerchief in the chest pocket was a little rumpled. Cam thought it sporty the line. The man looked like a dancer. But the sneering face looked even the strength for that.

The girl on the obese lounge was right out of a book. The sulky wide mouth which gave men through sexy made Cam sick. The thick



"It's a cop down on the street, Myron — he wants to know if you'd mind waiting until he found a girl and shoot!"



"Let's roll. That's the guy wanted for bigamy."

auburn hair fell across one side of the heavily made-up face to her shoulders. The carved body lay dissolved in some kind of velvety material which changed color as she moved. The sequins caught the light and made her sparkle like a chandelier.

Corn tried to make up his mind whether she was one of the boys or just decoration. Decoration, he decided. They all had one thing in common. They were night owls — they came out only at night.

Some South American notes drifted across the room.

The thin man returned to his futuristic easy chair and looked across at Corn.

The silence was broken by the blond-faced man's entrance. The big figure moved heavily and the surplus layers of fat beneath the chin applied in time. He grunted and then sighed as his bulk was taken from his legs by another easy chair.

"Get me a whiskey and soda and a cigarette," he said to no one in particular.

The thin man rose silently and passed back across to the drink bar.

"The phone in a useful instrument. It saves so much time and worry," the blond-faced man mused out aloud.

"What?" asked Cruber anxiously.

"Oh?" contributed the girl.

"A happy lot are we not, stranger? Tell me your name," the blond-faced man demanded.

Corn said nothing.

"Well, to make it easier, I'll tell you mine, though I expect you

already know it. My name is Charles Morrison. Some call me Charlie, some call me Mr. Morrison, some — the hired help, mainly — have to call me, or You can call me Mr. Morrison."

Corn looked at him and told him

he didn't know who he was, where he was or what was happening. Cruber stood up, walked across to him and swung the gun in one easy movement.

When Corn had forced himself to his knees, he managed to notice that none of them had moved. He decided that this sort of thing must go on all the time. Morrison's voice was coming at him through a cloud. It had the same even, polite pitch. A gentleman. There was a short silence while Corn tried to make out the words. The thick cloud reached into his memory and made him forget it all. Morrison tried again.

"Your name," he said, "And why you and Andrews were so certain you could get away with it."

Andrews. Now there was a new name. Who the hell was Andrews? Perhaps they meant the Greek. But he had nothing to do with the Greek. Where the hell was he, anyway?

Corn slowly shook his head. "No idea what you are talking about," he said slowly and thickly.

Morrison sighed an exasperated sigh. The thin man walked back across the carpet and handed him the drink. As Morrison sipped it, the thin man's heavy hand slipped into his side pocket for a lighter.

(Continued on page 76)



"This is a laugh — when we were kids, he and I used to play cops and robbers — only I was a cop."

ACTION-STACKED CARDS



Sorrowful Clane was a gambling man — he looked for adventure everywhere, even in a sun-parched, gold-laden desert...

THERE WAS A QUIET, dreamy expression on Sorrowful Clane's black eyes that morning as he trudged into the Nevada desert, the crisp air was bracing to the spurs of a gambling man of his stripe. Shortly after dawn he paused to shift the broad leather strap which let his two quarts of water sag from his shoulders almost to the lower fringe of his long black coat.

FICTION / RUBEN JENNER



The sun suddenly struck up an orb of burnished gold on the horizon and ahead Clane wet his lips from one of the canteens, drew his heavy gold watch from the pocket of his immaculate black vest, glanced at it and laughed inwardly at himself. "As if time matters today."

By then the sun had added three quarters of a circle to its arc and it speedily became an orb of screaming heat. If he trudged toward it till noon, let it pain terribly overhead, and then kept it behind him, that would be enough to determine his early course.

But the desert began presenting new problems. Within an hour the dancing heat waves had persuaded him to remove the coat and carry it under his arm. Then a hot breeze began picking up particles of sand and the entire world around him began to whinger with tantalizing music which Clane instinctively knew was a drizzle of things long dead.

At first he thought the breeze meant a sand storm but it never got that bad. He found that the desert can be subtle in its little tricks. It can put tiny sand particles into the air that gather in clouds and look like smoke that swirls and disperses and gathers again.

The breeze went dead, but before then it had barred the sun and Clane found himself in a world without beginning or end, with no earth or sky. There was no north, no south, no sun and no direction. Clane was lost.

Sharp monotony and peace had driven him from the new Comstock Gold camp back toward the open range and settlement, but his adventurous spirit would not permit him to ride the soft cushions of the stage with his few belongings. Twice he had heard of the thirst-mad desert strangled him.

Clane was a man who must examine things for himself, and he hoped by crossing it on foot to meet some of the gold-mad men who were supposed to roam the wasted barrens — or perhaps to fall into a hidden gold cache himself.

He carried only the water, a few bits of food in a leather bag, and in a side pocket of his coat, two decks of cards which his right hand occasionally massaged fondly. Their suits were still unbroken.

Had Clane been forced to choose between parting with the pasteboards, with which his long professional fingers could truly accomplish marvelous things, or part with the precious water, he would have tossed the water aside unhesitatingly. Such was Clane's luck at deck.

Realizing he was lost, he sat down in the warm sand, opened a canteen and wet his lips. From his coat pocket he took one deck of the cards and thought of playing solitaire a while — the gambler was a calm and patient man. He reasoned that the dust would settle again as it had so many times.

So Sorrowful Clane smiled at the deck of cards and laughed at himself, then lazily dropped the cards back into his pocket unopened. It was not good luck to break the seal on a new deck unless there were truly stakes of value.

The day warmed slowly. The heat seemed intensified by the closeness of the dust-laden air but a little respite showed Clane there had not been enough wind to obscure his footprints in the sand. He could, therefore, retrace his own steps providing the wind did not rise again and make matters worse.

Twilight burned down out of a grey-brown sky and, with a chuckle of unseen amusement at his own predicament, Clane lay his coat on the sand and curled up upon it. He slept almost immediately, with less discomfort than he expected.

It must have been a premonition which woke him. He opened his eyes with caution, as if the shadow of danger had preceded reality and warned him. There was no breath of air moving and no sound, but the heavy atmosphere had closed enough to allow the sickly light of a dying moon to show a moving shadow some 10 feet from him.

Clane did not move a muscle. His senses came instantly alert. At first the shadow was an obscure, formless thing, but as it drew nearer he recognized it to be a man crouching stealthily upon his knees and using his left hand and wrist as additional support.

The stranger's right hand held a revolver ready and Clane knew this man was crouching upon him while he slept with the intention of killing.

It was also apparent to Clane that he was in no material danger as long as he lay perfectly still and his attacker did not suspect him of wakefulness. The man had the gun ready but not leveled. Unquestionably he intended creeping close enough to place the muzzle directly above Clane's temple.

Clane was a man of quick reason. The man was dragging a small but heavy bag with his left hand each time it moved forward. Even though he crouched, his gut was steadily. His tongue hung out like an exhausted animal's and there was no canteen at his hip or shoulder.



"You have a chance if we can prove that six specimens are dying."

"That bag contains gold," Clane reasoned. It was not a hard thing to divine. Nothing else would be heavy enough to cause such manifest exertion each time the man moved forward, and for nothing less than gold would any man have discarded a water supply or have come so far without it.

The man was planning to kill Clane to get his water. Death would be like that, quick and final, and the story of Clane's end would be told only by the whispering winds.

The killer's movements did not make a sound in the soft, warm sand. As he drew nearer, the light of the glaucous moon increased the hideousness of his features. Clane's brain calculated the quick movement which would be necessary to reach the little derringer in his snout holder and measured his chances.

The killer was no more than four feet away now. Clane's arm partly covered his face and his attacker had no opportunity to notice the slits of his half-open eyes. The gambler lay there and calculated how this man with the gold-heavy sack must have traded him during the day. He had likely been too exhausted to overtake Clane as long as the gambler strode on. But when the breeze had lifted the sand curtain and made Clane stop, the murderer had still been able to follow the prints of his boots toward the water he needed.

Now the man was upon him, leveling his weapon. Now he would

kill Clane or Clane would kill him, or, if Clane made a sudden move, one would wound the other and the best and surest would win a more terrifying obituary than bullets.

Somewhat Clane considered all this with the same, calm reason of a man who had often faced death. As the killer raised high on his knees to kill this man, who once had studied to play Shakespearean parts upon the stage, Clane moved feebly. "Water! Water!" he pleaded feebly. "My

containers are empty. Water! Water! Or I die."

Surprise from the killer motioned him, Clane moved slightly, pretended an attempt to rise, and fell back on his face, his arm only partly shielding his eyes so he could still see.

If there were no water and this man was dying anyway and was helpless, why should he be killed? The man's hand, being disrupted from its intended channel, took an instant to readjust itself to new conditions, perhaps to realize that Clane had been treading forward strongly only a few hours before.

In that instant of his enemy's indecision, Clane launched his attack.

The gambler shot his arms out gun-like. His strong hands seized the throat-struck man's gun wrist and twisted it aside even as the weapon exploded horrendously. The weakened attacker propped out curses and succumbed freely before Clane's superior strength. Clane dismissed him quickly, then offered him a few drops of water.

"More! For God's sake, give me more." Little flakes of blood stood on the man's lips, looking black and ugly in the eerie light.

Clane administered the precious liquid sparingly. After a time, when the man was able to talk, he attempted to break down his submission and get his story.

"You have gold in the bag," he suggested. "Why did you attempt crossing the desert with it when you had no water?"

"I had water," the hoarded man drew his treasure up against his chest and lay down across it. "But not enough."



"I'm giving Mr. Williams the shock treatment . . . send him this bill."

"You intended killing me," Clane accused in conversational tone, "which wasn't a friendly way of approach. You evidently know the desert and I am lost. We might be able to help each other."

The stranger lay on his stomach, clutching at his gold. He wouldn't risk any more or answer Clane's questions, and the gambler, who had seen many kinds of men, wondered what his story could be. But Clane decided to let him rest, occasionally passing him a drop or two of water which the stranger always struggled up eagerly to drink but never expressed any gratitude for receiving.

Down broke at last and the air was less murky. Clane turned the day by his heavy watch but a passing hour brought no man, there was only a lighter glow of yellow gray heat in what seemed a wrong direction, but which Clane knew must be to outward.

He could not wait too long with the stranger, whom he suspected was gaining strength much faster than he pretended, but neither had he yet decided it would be just to go on and leave him. He must also be sparing of his precious water.

"Do you play poker?" he demanded at last. He drew forth one of the decks of cards and held it in his palm.

This seemingly foolish suggestion exposed the stranger. "What a hell of a question. Give me more water," he demanded.

Clane shrugged. "I have water and you have gold. It would hardly be fair for me to take the gold without



"I keep having 'K' rated dreams."

giving you some chance for your life. Do you play poker?"

The fellow sat up, his eyes filled with disbelief. Neither could he understand how Clane had guessed his bag contained gold. "I can play poker," he admitted with new signs of life and hope in his tone.

Clane broke the seal on the deck of cards. "What were you running away from?" he asked casually. "A

man doesn't cross a desert with a heavy sack of gold without plenty of water unless there is something urgent driving him." Clane riffled the cards and played the pack down in the sand. "Cut."

The stranger's hand moved forward, stopped just short of the cards. He let his bloodshot eyes rise to Clane's and his hands fell back against his knees in the sand — an expression of clashing came into his eyes.

"I'm Bobo Hutchin. I got this gold from old Desert Joe, who's been bringin' the stuff in off the desert for years." Hutchin leaned nearer, his words became more slow and unassuming. "I been tradin' the coyote a long time and three days ago I found his layout. His diggin's are damn rich."

Clane nodded. "You didn't cut the cards," he said.

Hutchin reached forward, felt for the deck and cut without looking at it. "I should have killed Desert Joe like I intended killing you, but I didn't. He damn near got me with a rifle bullet before the sand blasted out my trail. There was a bad storm at the edge of the desert. It didn't reach this far."

Clane dealt five cards to each of them and glanced up. "Your cards." He pointed at them. His expression remained totally poker-faced.

Bobo Hutchin grew angry. He

Early convict road-working gangs

IN THE EARLY YEARS of Australia's settlement, convict gangs were set to work building roads and bridges to link the main centres to nearby outlying settlements.

When Macquarie became Governor of New South Wales (1810), he found "the few roads and bridges formerly constructed rendered almost impassable", and "the resources then under my control very inadequate for repairs and improvements". However, he managed to build roads to the main settlements outside Sydney — Parramatta, Liverpool and Windsor — and over the Blue Mountains to the new settlement of Bathurst in 1813.

In the 1820s, the Surveyor-General, Sir Thomas Mitchell, expanded and improved the road system as the colony, "ably assisted by a Scot named David Lindsay, who designed solid and beautiful stone bridges".

Convicts still preceded the labor, the worst types usually being put on to the work. In New South Wales, where there were many free settlers who could be plundered and exploited by these workers, the convicts usually worked in gangs, and at night were locked up. In Van Diemen's Land, where there were fewer free settlers at that time, road parties usually worked free of chains.

In the other colonies, roads were laid out in the main centres. One colonist claimed that, in 1816, Melbourne's streets "brought the better learned resort of road, with swarms of men yet unbroken away in their midst". Brisbane was settled in 1824.

picked up the cards, turned them over without glancing at their denominations and threw them face up in the sand. "Desert Joe is still trading me, you fool. He'll kill me if he finds me."

Clane sat looking at the cards Hitchen had discarded. "Ain't that hell," he drawled. "Three aces. You could have won a good case of water with that hand."

Hitchen was alternately staring at the cards and at Clane's enigmatic face when the whistle of a bullet and the crack of a rifle spoke loudly to them both. Clane rolled over on his stomach and drew his derringer, both in one quick movement. Hitchen flattened himself and said hoarsely,

held his rifle in instant readiness. Clane holstered his derringer, dropped Hitchen's gun into his pocket, pulled the sack of gold close up beside himself, then reached curiously for the cards which had become scattered on the sand.

Desert Joe came forward somewhat unsteadily, the heavy rifle seeming about all he could manage. There was no canteen strapped to his body and the stern of thirst was evident. "Y-you got some water?" was his first question.

Clane noted that water was of more immediate importance than the matter of the stolen gold. He was far more favorably impressed with the lean, tall, sun-baked man of singular

and I don't want you shooting each . . ." Clane's right hand flashed into sudden action and the little derringer appeared in it before Desert Joe could bring his rifle to bear. With his free hand he reached forward the canteen of water. "I'll have to take the rifle," he said. "You can have a small drink, not very much."

The speed of Clane's demonstration astonished the prospector. He hesitated briefly, then a half smile of approval cracked his dry lips. He let the rifle's butt slide down and he grabbed eagerly at the canteen.

Hitchen sat in the sand glowering. Somehow Clane had the rifle made, then guided his water supply by tipping the canteen away from the prospector's lips as he holstered the derringer. "Not too much," he warned. "Too much is no good for you and I've still got a distance to travel."

The rim of the sun began shining through and soon a red ball of fire was moving up toward its zenith. Clane knew he had to be getting on, but these men intrigued him and they presented a problem. He had always believed life to be like a game of poker and these two made an interesting and dangerous hand to draw to.

"Sit down," he invited Desert Joe. "I have cards here." He showed the deck. "We certainly could have a right interesting game of poker."

The prospector squinted in the sand casting hostile glances at Hitchen who leaned on his elbows glowering only a few feet away. Clane sat himself as the third point of a triangle. He shuffled the cards sly in his hands.

Turning toward Hitchen, he said, "You're a thief and have a nice bag of gold."

"That gold belongs to me," Desert Joe interrupted angrily. "He stole—"

"I and he was a thief," Clane agreed. "But he does have the gold in his possession. Now, you, Joe, have a mine where there must be more of this gold . . . and I have water. We could play poker. Hitchen could ante gold. It's no business of mine where he got it. You can draw a map showing the location of your mine and make out a bill-of-sale. I will substitute water for blue chips."

The two men exchanged glances. Clane smiled, reaching fully how absurd his proposal first seemed. "I'm a just man," he explained. "I guess we haven't time to play poker but it is a way of clarifying the stakes we each hold." He produced from his vest pocket a sheet from a notebook and a pencil. This he handed to Desert Joe. (Continued on page 88)

Australia's first wartime shot

AUSTRALIA'S FIRST SHOT in World War I was fired across Port Phillip Bay.

On August 6, 1914, two days after Great Britain declared war on Germany, the *Spinnaker* Morning Herald reported:

"When dawn broke today there was one German vessel in the port of Melbourne. This was the *Platz*, a cargo steamer belonging to the *Wart-Deutscher Lloyd Company*. The *Platz* emerged from the Yarra mouth and passed *Williamstown* at fast speed. She ran down the south channel at full speed, and between noon and one o'clock reached *Geelong*, where the vessel slowed down to receive a visit from the examining officers, who boarded the *Platz* from the *Albatros*, which is engaged in the work at the mouth of the port.

"Evidently the clearance papers were in order, since, according to Pilot Robinson's story, the vessel was allowed to proceed. She had just got up speed again and was entering the Bay when a shot from *Geelong* fort plunged into the water about 50 yards astern. The pilot immediately looked up and saw the signal on the fort was against the vessel. His head was turned round and she came back up the bay. A guard of mines was put on board for the night."

"Give me back my gun and I'll help hold 'em off."

Looking in the direction from which the bullet had come Clane saw a man crouched low on the sand with a rifle about 100 feet from them. Hitchen was posturing hysterically. "We'll kill him. I'll show you his rich diggins and we'll split 20-50."

Clane gave Hitchen a glance of disgust. He certainly intended to keep both weapons. With a quick movement he now got hold of Hitchen's bag and jerked it from him.

"He'll just kill you or take it from you anyway," Clane said. "You'll be safer if I have it." Then he shouted loudly to the man crouching on the desert. "I've got your friend's gun and he's too weak to fight anyway. Walk on up and you won't get hurt."

Desert Joe didn't shoot again but neither did he come forward. It took considerable coaxing and repeated assurance from Clane before the man would approach and even then he

gave more money than with Hitchen. This fellow had deep blue eyes that met his own and looked honest.

Clane dropped the cards he had gathered into his pocket, picked up one of the canteens and stood up, keeping the remaining full canteen and the sack of gold close at his feet.

"Give me your rifle," he suggested amiably, "and you may have a small amount of water." He was willing to gamble Desert Joe was not a man to kill a stranger without good provocation.

But Desert Joe jerked the rifle back. "No," he barked dryly. "I'll keep the rifle." He gave Hitchen a hostile glance.

"He gave me his gun and I gave him water," Clane reasoned. He tilted the butt of Hitchen's gun high enough from his pocket for Desert Joe to see it and dropped it back.

"I'm a fair hound," he insisted. "I've got the water you both need



SUMMER DAYS



SUMMER DAYS

Remember those summer days
of salt-scented hair,
The aroma of barbecued fish,
And sun-colored girls
on the sand, so fair?
But it's spring,
and summer's nearly here,
Those same sights and smells ...
So, don't fear ...





ESCAPE FROM UGANDA'S "BLACK HOLE"



Spitting on his ID card — signed by President Amin himself — the soldiers forced him into a horror compound at gunpoint. Death by suffocation seemed the only way out . . . **FACT / AL PORTO**

WE HEARD THE SHOOTING late on Sunday night, maybe early on Monday morning, but I didn't think a hell of a lot of it. Things were coming unstuck in Uganda. I had a hangover and the shuffling sounds my skull was a dazed sight rather than the sound of shooting from the direction of M'era some 10 miles from the Tanzanian border. And I needed sleep if I was going to make a run for it next morning. I rolled over in the bunk of the Land Rover's camper.

Jimmy Hare was sitting rigidly, feet on the deck, and I swear I could hear him shivering in the unbelievable heat. I asked him what was bugging him? He said things were bad. He was a Sukuma tribesman, my translator, my guide, my buddy, but that was as hell wasn't any news.

I figured, come the dawn's early light I was going to get out of Uganda, job or no job, governmental blessing or no governmental blessing. I mean, a piece of paper from a desk jockey at Kampala might get me through a road block but there was no way it could stop a bullet. So I was leaving for the healthier climate of Tanzania. Since my mind was made up and the beer was gone, I fell asleep again.

A banging and clanging woke me. I couldn't see for a second although the smell told me a lot of sweaty body bodies were crowding the camper. A light blinded me. I tried to sit up and something hard and heavy like a gun butt hit my chest and smacked me flat again. The camper was shaking like it was in a hurricane.

"Out! Out! Out!" a voice kept shouting. Jimmy let out a howl and I was having trouble infusing my lungs. Grappling hands entered the light, tried to jerk me off the bunk, sort of massed, and I spilled on the deck. More hands grabbed my ankles and pulled and I popped out the rear entrance like the pup in a hammer-bait peach.

It was moon-bright and I could see okay. Jimmy was sagging between two Ugandan soldiers. One side of his mouth was a mess. His teeth on that side were either gone or covered in blood. His eyes were two half-moon-thins.

Hard fingers pulled me to my feet and I was facing an officer. Even a barely educated native in Uganda speaks English and I started shouting, "American! American! I work for Uganda, for President Idi Amin. For Uganda!"

He shouted something, in Luganda I suppose. Nobody was talking, everybody was shouting. Guys were slowly rearranging in the camper. The officer kept shouting and one of his guys came out with my passport folder. He looked at over, tapped the front cover and yelled, "You United States?"

"Yes," I yelled. "American. Work for President Idi Amin."

"You American spy?" he howled in rage. "Work for Central Intelligence Agency. Hire Tanzania."

I felt like I was dead. "No! No! For Uganda. Look inside!"

A fist like a bowling ball came down the alley and hit the middle of my face. I have a tender nose so the bone popped, blood gushed, some getting on the officer's uniform which wasn't too clean anyway.

"Do not yell at me," he yelled. "Do not give orders. I give orders." He looked inside the leather passport folder, tossed the latter toward me by the Department of Electrical Development and reconsidered by Idi Amin, unwrapped it from the protecting plastic. A flashlight was held for him while he read it, occasionally sipping from a dark bottle.

He grunted at me and I thought I was home free. Then he said, "Only spy carry something like this."

My stomach sort of gave way, and to make sure I stayed completely lousy, he belted me another one. I was only part conscious when they dragged me to the three-ton British-built truck they had glided to us with engines and lights off. They threw Jimmy and me on the floor and put their heavy shoes on us.

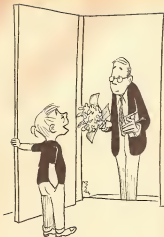
One soldier I could see was grinning, aiming his finger at me and coughing and smacking his thumb in the universal gesture of the firing squad. Right then it looked to me as though he was going to be dead right — and I was going to be just plain dead.

We came to M'era, a farming community crossroads where the major buildings were the barracks and the jail. The first light of dawn was just cracking. Jimmy and I were yanked out of the truck. He was hustled inside the jail. I was forced to my knees by two soldiers and the lieutenant stood in back of me.

That is how it's going to end, I thought. A bullet in the back of the neck.

I originally came to Uganda at the request of the government. Actually, at the request of my company I'm a construction boss for an electrical utility supplier and I'm a bachelor. I guess that's why I was chosen. I blundered and they took that as acceptance, gave me a crash course in Uganda, its present and its plans for the future.





"Welcome to 'Sucker of the Month' Club!"

When you first land at Kampala's airport you say, "Hey! Wow! Real modern!" Then you go into the city and discover you can spit from one end to the other. And it's the biggest city they have. There were other contrasts, too. Like the biggest political wheels rode around in Mercedes 600s, the major wheels had Cadillacs, the lesser ones drove Fiats, while ordinary John Q. Citizen was lucky to have a pair of pants to his name.

I discovered the Department for Electrical Development stuck in a corner of Government Building, and in the inner office of the office, I found the cat behind the desk wearing gold rimmed glasses, a white suit, a white shirt and a tie! In Kampala, on the equator, the daytime temperature is like 120 degrees. Talk about the price of bureaucracy. Even the English weren't that stuffy.

He had been expecting me and we got our business done pretty quick. He gave me this sheet of paper typed out in both English and Luganda, authorizing me to go anywhere I wanted, requesting any supplies I wanted, call on any official for any

help I needed. A very nice deal. He then proceeded to leave me up by saying he had chosen an army private as my guide.

I got nothing against a private, having been one myself, Signal Corps. But every soldier has a superior, and if the superior orders him to guide me left when night would be more in my interests, he does it. Since this was a competitive deal I had to have perfect freedom to decide routes, what was won, whether to use poles or pylons, stuff

like that. No way I was going to use his man.

I told him arrangements had already been made, a heavy deposit had down on transportation and such, my company stood to lose a lot of loot if I didn't fill the contract, and questions would be asked, from President Idi Amin on down. Not having any choice, he smiled it off.

I kicked around town, asking questions. Car rental was hopeless. Uganda isn't urban country as I quickly found out, and without hunters there's damned little four-wheeled transportation of the type I had in mind. Then an English newspaper reporter told me about an old military gent who had a "mower" — that's what he called it — installed on the back of a Land Rover, and might be willing to rent it.

Colonel Ronald Pearne was willing to rent it because he was heading for the cool of the Rwenzori Mountains to escape the mortal heat. When I told him I was covering the southern area, from Lake Victoria to the mountains, he recommended I hire Jimmy Ham. Jimmy came from that area, knew the country, the dialects and was available for any number of reasons. He wasn't doing too well in Kampala because he was a Sukuma tribesman and when the ruling Bakanda passed out the gravy, there just wasn't any left for the Sukumas.

I liked Jimmy from the moment I met him. He was big, strong, moved across the ground effortlessly and was far from being a dummy. He spoke Sukuma, Bakanda, Luba, Swahili, Luganda, and English for starters, and more dialects than fingers and toes. He was a guy who laughed a lot, and you just didn't feel down when you were around him.

Uganda isn't a very big country and in the next few weeks we covered the southern area like blotting paper, ready to die one day from heat near the lake shore, then driving uphill the next all the way to

The Bird Tree is an Aussie giant

THE BIRD TREE, the biggest blackbutt known to exist, was over 100 years old when Captain Cook named the Brothers Mountains near which it grows.

Reaching to a height of 227 feet with a girth of 27 feet, the tree is estimated to contain 46,000 super feet of timber. About 216 miles of these inch by two inch something could be cut from it.

The blackbutt is one of Australia's most important hardwoods, and is usually 120 to 200 feet in height and about 21 feet in girth.

The huge tree was discovered early this century by a man named Bird, and is a noted tourist attraction in the Taro district on the New South Wales north coast.

the Mountains of the Moon where we dance near frost. Whenever we went near Kampala on weekends, we went to town to get drunk.

About the beginning of September Mr Amun, an ex-pug who shot his way to the presidency, began making some pretty vicious speeches — stuff like Uganda for Ugandans, which it is already, and worst of all he gave a whole speech about "our economic life being strangled by Asians." While he poured out money on Mercedes 600s and new weapons for his army, he painted the faces of financial guilt at the Indians and Malaysians who had originally been brought there by the British.

It upset the European community I should explain here that European to an African native means anyone from a technological society, Russian, French, American, Chinese. Even an American negro is called a European.

Anyway, Mr Amun kept beating up the subject and the Europeans, including me, were wishing he'd forget it. Then he really dropped the other shoe — the pronouncement that all Asians holding British passports had to get out and leave their life's earnings behind. That retrospective jive is handy stuff for a country that's only 10 years old, and has already had three presidents shot out of office.

Jimmy and I were heading for



"I can't understand it and I slipped the Master D' twenty cents . . ."

Kampala when we heard the news on the radio. Jimmy explained how he'd better disappear because he was sure to be next on the list. I argued with him that at least he was the right complexion and I was next. But he

said no, they wouldn't be getting around to me for a while, not all they finished with the Asians.

We were still looking the problem over when I had to hit the books for a road block that hadn't been there two weeks ago. Worse, it was manned by members of the Special Branch, Mr Amun's personal bodyguard which he uses to keep Uganda a strict one-party nation. Their official duties are somewhat between policing and soldiering, and their powers are unlimited.

A sergeant, undressing his automatic rifle, came to my side and asked for my ID. I gave him my passport and more letter. He examined the documents, then gave them back with the attitude that if I waited around too much longer, he'd come gassing for my skin. The letter was losing some of its magic. Then the sergeant strolled to Jimmy's side.

Jimmy had papers proving he was born inside the territorial boundaries of Uganda but those same papers said he was a Sikhism, which meant he wasn't good enough for hyenas to swallow. I mentioned that he was with me, and if Mr Amun thought I was good enough to travel around his country, then why the hell was the sergeant to argue with Mr Amun's judgment?

That scored him a little — just a little. Maybe enough to back off from shooting us both. He passed us



"No, no — not that one, Miss Terrible — the big one."

through. The sergeant scared me. Especially his attitude.

We decided we couldn't get the true picture of what was going on unless we went to Kampala. Eventually we took the back roads but we were coming in from the back country, and were stopped by ordinary cops just twice.

Jimmy dropped off in The Pit section — the wrong side of the tracks in anybody's language. The people there were well starved — in an agricultural nation — but through the propaganda they had a hell of a lot better line on what was happening than the news analysts in Nairobi. The Kampala radio itself had long since become a propaganda organ. We made arrangements to meet and I drove for the city centre.

I damn near didn't make it. Drunken police and soldiers were firing their weapons all over the place using Asian storefronts as targets. Soldiers carrying bottles staggered shoulder to shoulder on the streets, pushing everybody into the gutter, looking for trouble. They didn't get any. Everybody gave way.

I backed up the Land Rover, got off Presidential Avenue and followed back alleys till I thought I was somewhere around the Grand Hotel, which was the newspaper hangout. Guys I had met were there, and the situation was worse than Jimmy and I had thought. Mt. Africa had



"See him in a world of his own."

been told confidentially that Tanzanian troops had invaded Uganda.

The usually well-informed guys thought it was a terror tactic designed to scare the Asians out of Uganda. I knew what it was scaring out of me. Then some reporters came in who had been covering Government House, and they said they had

been told confidentially that Tanzanian troops had invaded Uganda.

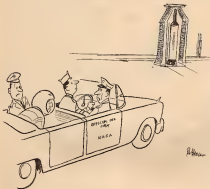
Someone laughed bitterly. Everyone turned to stare at him. He shrugged. "When the beer's on, the way to get it off you is start a fire some place else."

We got the idea. World opinion was against Mr. Asian's recent policy, so now he was claiming an invasion. In truth, if Julius Nyerere of Tanzania wanted to invade Uganda, there wasn't much to stop him. Tanzania had the manpower and the ability. I guess Mr. Nyerere also had the morals, because he showed no signs of picking on a little guy taught with his paws down. This is just my personal opinion. Maybe the reality is different.

Anyway, that seemed to close out politics for the night. We got down to the unexcuse business of getting drunk and wondering if we should try to split while all the soldiers were trigger-happy, or wait a little and hope things cooled off. I mean, there was no way you could make it to the airport without getting held.

The next day, Sunday, I ignored my hangover, loaded the flower wren and beer, picked up Jimmy and we slipped out of the city for the south, sucking on the beer to keep our throats wet. He told me there was no doubt about the shooting at the south, but it was Ugandans against Ugandans — maybe a civil war.

That's all I needed, a civil war. Either side could shoot me because



"Don't tell me he's our dick again?"

Cyclone brought coastal marvel

IT IS WELL KNOWN fresh water can be dipped from the sea where the Amazon enters the Atlantic, but few people know it has also happened off the North Queensland coast.

Ships coming in to view the wreckage of Mackay after a cyclone in January, 1918, found fresh water on the top of eight miles out — fresh water, of course, a lighter than salt and gelid on the lip.

The water ran out to sea from wrecks and coasts flooded by 50 inches of rain in three days.

Unlucky nearby, it killed a lot of coral and marine life.

The official tally of human dead on the blow was 33 but others were never accounted for.

they'd think I was friendly to the other side. Anyway, I drove slow, not only because I was a little drunk but also because I didn't want to run into any road blocks by surprise. I knew where the regular police stations were and gave one a ride's detour. From what I could see through binoculars, the cops were pinned out drunk.

Towards evening I reached this little grove of trees that gave us some shade and broke up our outlines. This was the high plateau country — about 1000 feet — and the temperatures didn't go much over a 100, but you could see forever. That's one reason I didn't want to get too close to the border.

I was willing to make a sneak-in daylight where I could be seen from far off and the guarding Ugandan troops would think it was a message or reinforcements or a warning bomb hat, and they'd hold their fire till I was fairly close, at which point I hoped it would be too late. But approaching at night, when they had nervous trigger fingers, was just asking for a bullet.

That's where we were when they jumped us. I suppose a patrol spotted us, went back for help, and the lieutenant took a detail and rolled the truck up to us without lights or engine. If Jimmy Hare didn't hear them, they had to have been damn quiet.

In front of the M'ms pad these two cops had my arms twisted so I was bent forward on my knees, waiting for the bullet. Instead, the lieutenant started whispering in his Sans English accent with a hint of my own. "You are an intelligent man. You realize it is all over. I do not ask you to confess yourself, but you can confess the mistakes of your comrades. We have known for some time you were mapping all the routes between the lake and the mountains. Save yourself and admit it."

My twisted arms had put tension

on the back of my neck and started my broken nose bleeding again. "I have your president's permission," I said like a robot, "to go where I want and order around those I need. I order you to release me." It was a stupid order, strictly a bluff, but I had to try.

"You are a fool." He took a swig from his jug. "Your last opportunity. You were hired by Tanzania, correct?"

"No!" I yelled. "I was hired by President Idi Aton."

The lieutenant was disgusted. "Put the — on him." He used a word I didn't know, but I was about to learn its practical application.

Still on my knees, they jammed a stick behind my knees, another behind my back on front of my elbows, and a third over my shoulders, tying the three ends together so I was scratched up like a ball. Doesn't sound like much? Just

stay like that a while, just a little while.

The pain starts in your back and shoulders and neck. The thighs cramp, the coils go into spasms, and of course the knees feel like knives are being pushed into them. Then the pain spreads out and you become one solid aching mass. You feel like you have no skin, all the nerve ends are exposed. The temperature goes up, up. The sticks become white-hot bars that pierce the exposed nerves.

The worst, I think, is that you can't draw a decent breath. The only way to breathe is by taking short, quick gulps. Inside an hour I was panting like a hard-worked dog and the sweat dropped off me in a steady stream on to the dry, dusty ground.

Then the thirst started. I was losing moisture rapidly. The temperature was still rising and the heat was bouncing off the white concrete in front of me. I was in an oven. From the panting, my tongue soon dried, swelled and filled my mouth. The surface turned leathery and cracked. The air rushing in and out over the raw flesh like a branding iron.

The day was just beginning. I fell over to my side, and either my eyes were going bad or the heat waves were affecting me, but I saw everything through a dancing haze.

It was a roundup of fugitives. A Catholic mission was raided and the White Fathers were pulled off trucks and hustled into the jail. Some of these were black men.

(Continued on page 82)



MATTER OF PATIENCE

The old whaler shark knew he would only have to wait a little longer before he could once again become the feared king of the sea . . .

FICTION / E. J. BAILEY

FOR 10 MINUTES the storm had beat down on blue-green water. Then, with equal suddenness, it shifted north, leaving a legacy of boiling surf and tons of kelp and soft coral littering the reef. It had left the man on a coral niggerhead.

He was unconscious and bleeding in a dozen places, but his hands had a death-like grip on the cemented rock and the waves could not pound him loose. In time, the wind dropped and the sea calmed, but it was not until he had been able to force open his salt-encrusted eyelids that the man knew for certain he was still alive.

As his brain took over, his grip on the coral relaxed, but it took a lot of effort for him to sit up and it sapped most of his reserves. He noted that the niggerhead was covered in barnacles and stony kelp and was a crude circle in shape with a diameter of about six feet.

He began to take stock. The boat was nowhere to be seen, then he remembered it had lasted 10 minutes and was broken up. He was sorry about the boat because it was like losing an old friend. He had once weathered the tail end of a cyclone in the same boat but now it was gone, even though pieces of it might drift in some time to time to be thrust far up on the beach.

Of all things he wondered what had become of the mackerel, because, in a way, the mackerel was to blame. He had been tooling a wide area, working up the side of the reef then sweeping out in a crescent and cutting back to the reef. The mackerel had hit somewhere along the crescent and the man had known that the fish was big and full of fight. He had sensed the coming storm, but had reasoned there was time when the mackerel went deep the man had lost some of that time. To worsen matters, a shark wave had killed the motor and he was in deep trouble.

He wasn't sure how he had made the suggestion. He had been trying for the reef but the sea was throwing him every way and perhaps they had thrown him on to that rock outcrop. Not that this mattered a great deal to the man because what had happened was over and done with, and only the future could hold his interest.

His legs and body throbbled from multiple cuts, and cloth from his ripped pants clung to open wounds, but a combination of sun and salt would stop the bleeding. Purely from habit he started to empty his pockets and spread everything out. The result was pitifully meagre.

The pack of cigarettes had merged into a jelly-like congealed of tobacco and paper. His fancy lighter would be probably half buried on the sand bottom, along with the sleeping rays. Fortunately his wallet was still intact although dyed off some notes were running wild and scattering his personal papers.

He squeezed the wallet so that it crumpled the gold initials, and recalled the night of his farewell presentation. Twenty-six years with Acme Insurance, and he had decided to quit. They all said he was mad — that only a fool would get out in his mid-forties. Another decade, sure, anything to beat the day they looked a man out. Or in his thirties, when a man could feed himself. But not the mid-forties.

Even Lou said it was wrong to quit. But Lou was only his wife, and she didn't know everything about him. She didn't know, for example, about the lottery win he'd collected under another name. Two hundred thousand dollars in cold cash and tax free, and the bulk of which was stacked away in gold edged.

But a man had to be patient. After he'd left Acme he'd booted around in a small brokerage. Three

more dull, colorless years with Lou. He had to wait for the right moment. One night he had told her. He'd said he was going south and he wasn't coming back, ever. He gave her \$20,000 and said it was everything he had in the world. She believed him — poor, stupid Lou.

Half sitting, half lying, there on the rock island, he thought of many things. He had money and he had the sun on his back and he was going to live to be a hundred. His house was built slap on the beach, where a man could listen to the takes pattern in under the floor, and night winds ruffle the Kente palms. He was the highest paid branchmanager south of the Equator and to hell with everyone.

Some evenings he would wonder up to the new motel on the Point and mingle with the people who came for two, three and at the most four weeks, before heading back south. The women climbed all over him because he was money and he was different and they wanted to end his loneliness.

Like the blonde whose husband was a big wheel in textiles in Sydney or Melbourne, but who was old and so fat he needed a trailer for his stomach. The blonde had stayed over for a week when her husband was called back suddenly. So he had taken her for a cruise to one of the uninhabited islands. Four days and four nights and she hadn't worn a stitch of clothing the entire time — not even when she took the wheel, or cooked his meals or when they played gin rummy on deck. When she pressed close to him, her full breasts against his naked chest, he wanted to laugh in her face, because he liked being a loser. He enjoyed the best of a half dozen worlds, and none was better than out in the best.

Thought of the boat snapped him out of his reverie. He continued to go





"How many times have I told you not to run with the sharkhead?"

through his pockets and came up with four heavyweight sinkers and a mass of 18 pound breaking strain nylon. There was no key ring. The keys had gone in a mad world of wine water, rain and gale force wind.

He looked about him and judged the distance from the niggerhead to the reef. It looked about 20 yards. All he had to do was build up some strength and swim across. He would have to do it eventually. The coast outcrop would be at least five to ten feet under with the high tide, but the reef would be only wash.

In the late afternoon, when the tide hit dead low, a party from the motel would come out to explore the reef and they would find him and he would be safe. It was simply a question of time.

He scanned the waters about his rock island, while his fingers gently probed the coils and streamers up and down his body. It was about this moment when he first saw the shark.

Sharks were no novelty in reef waters. Tigers, whalers, hammerheads — the assassins moved in to plunder, and then resumed their eternal patrol. He had caught a dozen or more on set lines and he had two sets of jaws mounted over the small bar in a living room. But this shark was moving to a timetable. He was cruising a complete circle, round and round the niggerhead. Slowly the man realized this shark was waiting for him.

From way back the whaler had known but one world. The fluster tides and currents, the patterns of light and shade, the attack and the break-off. From the moment he was spawped the whaler had brushed death in 100 forms. First, he had learned to evade the needle-toothed barracuda and sea pike, then the

vine-like jaws of big gropes. Always there was the lightning lunge of bigger sharks and the creeping crawling strangeness of the peramita.

He had lived through it all, up until now. He measured 14 feet and his gross varied between 1100 and 1250 pounds. He was combat hardened. True, he was old and weary and his reflexes were slowing, but he was still caggy. He was a veteran of 1000 big kills and with luck he would survive for a few more seasons before the packs moved in and carved him.

He swam slowly and in a kind of jet propulsion as the life-giving oxygen flowed in through his gill

sits. His every sense was dulcified by a restless, roving brain that had never known freedom from fear.

In the early years he had plundered the big mullet schools as they migrated up coast. He had tackled marine rays growing two tons and better. His shagreen body bore 40 combat scars and 1,000,000 sea lice were pressing him down.

Now, he was the scavenger, eating what was on offer. He wasn't choosy. He patrolled 200 miles of reef water and estuaries where there was usually something. Either it tasted good or it had no taste whatsoever, but almost everything was edible. His was the biggest self-service menu in the world.

The Mi-ris storm meant nothing to the whaler. In his time he had swam close inshore, under the breakers as they roared for the long run in. He had cruised beneath hurricane lashed surface waters and he had probed the bulks of long sunk ships. These things he had grown to know and to accept before he had logged the first 100,000 miles.

His hearing was acute and supplemented his poor eyesight. His instinct for locating death and decay was intense. Blood always attracted him. He had picked up the scent from 300 yards and had let it guide him to the niggerhead. The blood had to mean something edible, so he stalked out the jack.

He hadn't made a big kill in weeks. Sawtooth leatherjackets pulsed neatly in his stomach meant little to



"If a managed to replace your severed legs — however, in our haste . . ."

the whaler who was an under-nourished but his two legs were operating on a minimum of oil. He needed something big and lusty, so he could refuel for a coastal patrol. It was there on the niggerhead, but he would have to wait.

Staying below were two 10-foot tigers. They, too, had burned on the blood trail, but they were young and edgy and they wouldn't stay long. One of them made a pass at the whaler but backed off when he had a close-up of the power jaws. A female whaler ghosted up from the sea bed and melted back into the half light of depth.

The female was an eight-footer, sleek and well fed. There was a time when the whaler would have been interested in the female but not any more. He no longer felt the familiar ripple tremor his body. He was too old for the female and too slow for the fast food fish. He had to improvise, to take what he could. And sometimes, like now, he had to wait.

When the man got to 28 he stopped counting the shark's circles. Once, when the whaler passed no more than 10 feet from the niggerhead, the man was able to clearly see the lean, hard body. He could even detect the barnacles that clung to the shark's skin, and the living weed that streamed from the barnacles. He noticed that two small sucker fish clung just forward of the gill slits.

There was something horribly persistent about the shark's peeped counts. Dedicated, that was the word. The man was impressed but only up to a point. A man was a man, with the finest brain in existence, and a shark was only a fish. Sure, it needed thought and cunning, but the shark would give up. All the man had to do was wait for the moment when he would swim those 21 yards.



"You look like a man who has what it takes — a hundred bucks a night."

He knew it was 21 yards because he had measured the distance with a piece of line. He had tied a sucker one end, knotted every yard, and tossed the line over to the reef until the sucker found a crevice and held fast.

Twenty-one yards. He was no Mark Spitz but he figured he could do it in say 17 seconds. One thing was certain — he had the maximum incentive.

He gashed the reef at its nearest point and he knew precisely where he would grasp and where he would get a leg hold so when the moment came he would be ready.

The shark had extended his perimeter. Once it took him three minutes to circle the niggerhead, and the man knew he could have made the reef with ease, but then the shark could have deliberately given him some rope. There was no sense in rushing things, he had to sit the out.

The outcrop was underwater now, and because there was a chance that the drying clinging saltwater would make him lose balance, and open up a wound, the man had ripped off his shirt and bandaged his leg. He had also wedged himself into a small hole

Are kangaroos equipped to swim?

PROBABLY FEW AUSTRALIANS have ever thought about kangaroos swimming but a nine-year-old English boy was determined to find out if they do.

He wrote to the Home Government, Australia House, Oxford University, and the Natural History Museum. Only Australia House had a clue. They replied that "the animal's structure is believed to prevent it from doing so".

Finally, the Director of the Division of Wildlife Research at Perth provided the answer. He had seen kangaroos swimming on two occasions "occasionally, with much splashing of the forearms, in an upright position".

Now the inquirer seems to know "When kangaroos swim, do they paddles till with water?"

to help counteract the persistent tug of the tide. He knew that if he dived it would be fatal, so he did all kinds of calculations, mostly over his investments. And he dreamed of the island.

The island was five or six miles down coast and about 20 offshore. He knew that if he dared to stand on the highest point of the neighborhood he would be able to see the island. It wasn't very big. Just lush foliage trailing down to a right fitting hole of white sand. No one wanted to buy or lease the island because there was no permanent water, but with money he could overcome that. Money could overcome anything.

He dreamed of the house he would build on the island. Every

morning about him, he looked for the shark, but the shark had gone. He wanted no boat, no launch, even to sing, but he steered himself to do none of these things because it was not time to go. He had to wait another hour, at least. He had to be sure, dead sure.

He watched the sea continually pound the long, grey line of the reef that stretched as far as the eyes could see. That spot, cemented movement of minute dead creatures that piled the coast for more than a thousand miles. The reef was beckoning. It was comforting in its strength and durability. Twenty-one yards in 17 seconds.

In a stupid kind of way it was lonely without the shark because the

blue-green water. Twenty-one yards. He sat himself and picked the very second of time to appear in.

When he broke surface he let go with all the power he had, pouring everything into one condensed period of time, and the seal leaped fast, just as he had figured it would. Now the seal was with him, biting and helping. Three, perhaps four more strokes. He dropped his head and bowed in.

The two tigers had quit a long time back, leaving the whale undisputed king of the area. But the whale was so old that every second of being had become an effort. He knew only two basic aims, to eat and to stay alive. It was no longer skill and power that kept him in the game. It was infinite luck.

The blood went had long gone. It had been absorbed by the water and taken in by plankton which, in turn, had been consumed by small fish. The blood had long since been distributed and redistributed inside a thousand beings, but the source was still there on the rock island.

The whale had ceased to patrol the neighborhood. It never paid to advertise. You latched on to something and the victims gathered.

He had moved to the shelter of the reef and swam at around six fathoms. Here there were groper living in custom-built grooves, and the fast movers of 12-foot reef eels but these, too, were cautious. They knew how to position themselves where they were least vulnerable and they could defend. Sure, they could be taken, but not always cheaply, and if they managed to open up an old wound then no one was running.

Life was one big easy gamble. If you made a kill, everyone was on your side - in trouble, you were a sitting duck. With the reef in back of him at least he had one less dimension to cover. That he knew instinctively because it was inbred, just as he knew that in time the food source must quit the rock island.

When it eventually happened he was positioned. He traced the painfully slow leg action at surface level then coldly, deliberately and professionally, he calculated the angle of attack. When he moved up in one perfectly timed run his impetus was so great that his main dorsal cleaved air and the cascading water shone in the sun.

Later, the scavengers congregated but the pickings were few. Two banknotes sidestepping in the current, and an unutilized wallet resting in some branch coral.

Nothing more.

Round-up in the Territory's sky

HERDING BUFFALOES by helicopter sounds more like TV's "Cowboys in Africa" than outlaws in Australia, but that's just what's happening in the Northern Territory.

Stamps of wild buffalo feeding on densely wooded areas on the plains are stampeded into the open by the chopper and driven towards trapping yards.

After a few days in these yards they are loaded into trucks and taken to pens where they soon become as tame as domestic cattle. In due course they, or their progeny, are shipped to the nearest abattoir.

Buffalo meat is gradually gaining acceptance for human consumption in this country and an increasing amount is exported.

luxury and modern age garb, and yet it would blend with the island itself. When big sea turtles were lumbering up the sand in his eyes at night he would be sipping whisky out on the all-white sun deck.

Perhaps, too, he would build an underwater observatory so he could show marine life to special people, such as the divorcees whose names he could not remember but who came north each year to soak up the winter sun, and who played hard to get when she wasn't hard to get at all. Not really. Especially not when she made out she was drunk and therefore had no idea, later, that she was performing that stupid show girl routine at some party or other. All the same, she did have a good figure, even though she loosed up the bathroom when she showered off that brown goo off her body.

He continued to dream, and somewhere out there on the lake had a place in his mind. They were from the past. He cared only of the future, and his immediate future was the reef.

Sitting crouched, the waters

shark had honed the man's brain to razor edge, where now he could relax. And to relax would be folly. He had to keep in the game when the game was one player short.

He stood up and braced his body against the water. For a half hour he stood there, feet apart, flexing his arms to keep the blood circulating and curing every time the crabs took a tentative hold of his feet. The shark was one thing - he was big, with a direct approach. The crabs were rustling, faster towards who wanted for a stacked deck.

He imagined it would be nice to spend a couple of days in the small hospital on the hill, where they could treat his cuts and fuss over him because he was a big man in the village. They would listen while he told them the story of how he had swatted it out on the neighborhood, waiting for the right time to go.

He watched the cold, implacable sea in comparison to the sea the neighborhood was less than a grain of sand. It was nothing.

The time was close now. He watched the troughs and hillocks of



SKI-SOLDIERS RAIDED RIVA'S EYES

Continued from page 12

Maybe he still didn't understand the slow, toe-holding business that was mountain warfare. The 10th just wasn't built to move fast.

Hays bent over the Riva section of the map. Colonel Clarence Tomlinson of the 10th also squinted at the Riva contours scolded down from four miles to 24 inches.

At the south end a spreading writer of lines and elevation marks indicated snow-capped, 6000-foot Mount Mascarelli. Four miles to the north the ridge ended at Pizzo di Campo directly west of Belvedere. In between were the springs and lines denoting the slender spurs and lower, rocky back of Riva.

"Damn that mountain," Hays snapped in uncharacteristic annoyance. "No more than a thousand Germans up there and look at the hell they've been raising."

"Give us tonight, General," Tomlinson said with quiet confidence. "We'll escape 'em off."

Some of the officers shook their heads. After the tense briefing was over they moved gloomily out into the night. If Riva worked, their own units would be hurrying toward Belvedere within 24 hours. They had to get their men ready. But this Riva climb looked near impossible.

Only Tomlinson, the man responsible for the night's action, seemed optimistic. In accordance with Hays' order for all commanders to stay close to the front, he would be going with his climbers. "Don't worry, General," he laughed. "I've got mountain goats for men."

Hays grinned back. "Then tell 'em to look like hell when they get to the top."

Then Tomlinson was gone into the mist now shrouding the valley. There was nothing for George P. Hays to do but sit and wait. Although he'd come late to this outfit, he'd learned to respect and love it. Now the 10th was up against the acid test. After two years of training which cost millions of dollars, it would now justify or relinquish its right for existence in the US Army.

The story of how America's ski troops were trained and how General Hays came to command them was already an Army legend before they ever got to Riva Ridge. In fact, news before had an untired bunch reserved so much glamorous publicity.

That story began several years before, in prewar America, when leaders of the civilian National Ski Patrol noted the Army had no real mountain forces. Going straight to President Franklin D. Roosevelt they suggested such a force would be invaluable in the defense of Alaska. It could also hold its own in the great western mountains of the US should the nation ever be invaded.

No one expected invasion, but there was a dim chance that Alaska might be attacked some day. The Army seriously bought the idea. The 87th Infantry Regiment — America's first ski troop — was born on the slopes of Washington State's massive Mount Rainier. The National Ski Patrol provided instructors, gave advice on equipment, even helped recruit skiers.

Then came Pearl Harbor and the sudden, jolting realization the Japanese were well within range of Alaska. The Army decided to build a whole skiing division with the 87th as its nucleus. A beautiful site was chosen in the Poudre Valley of Colorado's

Rockies, and by late 1942 Camp Hale was training the now-dangled 10th.

The 10th's recruiting policy alone made it famous. With grueling combat conditions in isolated areas awaiting the outfit, it wanted only the toughest, most self-reliant, and preferably most self-experienced men. Applications poured into Hale from college skiers, the Forest Service, even far-north logging camps. Only the best were chosen.

Then came the training staff to whip these undisciplined recruits into shape. Teiger Teide, an internationally famous competition skier from Norway, practically ran all the way to Hale. He would not only train men but would lead them as a combat sergeant. Walter Peper, former coach of Dartmouth's crack ski team, also was given a sergeant-instructor's billet.

Seasons more fine athletes from America's racing and jumping ski slopes showed up too. Added to all this talent, Major General Lloyd F. Jones and a top-flight Army cadre revealed to the trainees the further necessities of rifle and grenade fighting, and the ruthless arts of hand-to-hand killing.

Camp Hale was bursting with life. The snowy slopes rang with cries of "Break your knees to the skin, damn it!" or "Break out crampon hooks and ropes and climb 200 feet of rock in 10 minutes!" The men paid the price of this relentless drill. Perfecting that even Christie turns on long history skis they sometimes ploughed up cliffs with ropes or prison made drums in for hostages, they often slipped and hurtled backward to earth.

Hale's grounds hummed with painful grunts, curses and moans. Its infirmery crew grew expert at dealing with broken legs, sprained ankles, even cracked heads. But the men stuck with it. They knew that for every recruit who pooped out, 10 more waited for admission to the "superman" division with the crossed ski emblem.

By 1943 the ski troops had a chance to prove their skill. The Army was greatly worried about Japanese troops occupying islands in the foggy Aleutians chain peering right up to Alaska. The 87th left Camp Hale to join other special troops for a strenuous amphib operation against those Japs.

Moving through a heavy fog the regiment landed on Aleutian beaches with tommyguns and grenades all ready. Some of the men even carried 90-pound-draw bows and arrows for



"I found the answer, but I forgot the problem."

short, long-distance hiking. But there wasn't one lap left to hit with those bullets and arrows Hiroshi's forces had abandoned the Aleutians when they realized they couldn't defend such a far-northerly position.

By late 1943 in fact, the 10th's chances of fighting in the Pacific dwindled daily. Alaska was no longer in danger. And the troops would have been about as useful as a snowball in hell down in the steamy South Pacific. But the training still went on.

The 87th was now represented by the 85th and 86th Regiments, engineers, and two artillery battalions — male-pack outfits with stubby, tube-barreled 75 mm mountain howitzers and lethal 37 mm anti-tank guns. The division was also one of the first to get the small, scout-sized vehicles called "wheats", which literally slid or crawled over rock and snow and cracks in the ice.

On March 24, 1944, the 10th was ready to show off. High ranking officers had come to watch an arduous, simulated D norm test on bleak, cold Tennessee Pass above Hale. The white peaks moved out.

Ghastly ski squads twisted and flew down white slopes to unumber weapons and pour live fire into weak enemy positions. Howitzers and heavy machine guns were unspooled from stumpy-breasted mules or clinging swells, ready to fire in minutes. Then the whole 10th — 12,000 strong now — huddled down for the night in Alpine hags at 40 below temperatures! The breeze was really impressive. "Authentic mountain troops", was their verdict.

But it still looked as if all that tough, bone-crunching training was in vain. In June, the Second Front opened on the Normandy beaches, and by August, Allied armies were heading for the Rhine. Fidgeting up in their Hale barracks, the Skunk Teeth felt worse than useless. Months dropped. Some men even asked for transfer.

It was at this critical point that orders came to pull out for Camp Swift, Texas. Southside was not. For the "unwanted division" there was only one place left to go.

"Italy — yeah man, the Army is way north in Italy now — headin' straight for the goddamned Alps!"

By the time the 10th was undergoing final combat training on the choking hot plains of Texas, they lost their first commander, General Jones, the guiding hand throughout those formative years at Hale, was leaving due to ill health. The Army had to get a real hotshot now to lead the truculent, super-trained, and

super-glamorized division. They found their man in Brigadier General George F. Hays, then arriving in France with the 2nd Division.

Hays had a colorful history. Born in Chao Foo, China in 1892, he joined the Army in 1917. Shipped to France to fight in World War I, his artillery battery distinguished itself by turning back heavy German attacks at the second Battle of the Marne and the historic Meuse Argonne offensive. Hays came home with America's highest award, the coveted Medal of Honor.

World War II found this dedicated officer — now 2nd Division artillery boss — again fighting Germans in France. This time in June of 1944, his gun smashed Nam fortifications at Bast for a big Allied breakthrough. Only months after that epic triumph the Army pinned major general's stars on him and flew him to Texas. The 10th now had a perfect leader.

Hays threw himself into learning all he could about mountaineering in the short time available. He also endeared himself to his men by announcing "When you're in action I want you to fight like hell. But when you're not, I want you to relax — have a good time". With this in mind the 86th sailed for Naples under General Duff, arriving on December 23, 1944.

Early February found the division joining IV Corps, Fifth Army, in the valley below Rome where the Po drive had stalled the previous fall. For the first time the 10th faced the enemy, duty threat of death. Not an hour went by when an 88 shell didn't whip in to explode around a ridge or knoll. The Germans firing on them had been recruited on the same steep base as the 10th itself — but already had seen years of combat.

"Those Nams have got to be

eliminated," was Mark Clark's terse order.

"The Teeth can do it," was Hays' confident reply.

A few miles west of where General Hays and his aides were sweating it out, the 86th got ready. It was after 11 p.m. and the mist was so thick at Rome's base it cut visibility to a few feet. Ghastly, white-clad men spread out in areas protected from the sporadic German fire above.

Rapid climbers tightened their gear around them, fastened ropes from waist to waist until as many as 40 or 50 men were held together in protection against falling. They moved ahead. With them went other units carrying machine guns and ammo cases, biscuits, a few light mortars.

The young lieutenant of a lead platoon in 2nd Battalion showed his body up along the cold snow. His name was George Stoddard and he had learned his mountaineering in his native Vermont. Twice he brushed snow away from small ledges, twice rejecting them as too small for footholds. Then his gloved hand passed. He had found a ridged flow running up the cliff face.

"Come on," he motioned to his platoon, "ropes and crampons."

Men strapped heavy metal spikes, called crampons, over their boots. One man edged ahead, fastening a rope to a protruding ledge. Using this as a rope anchor, the platoon pulled itself off the valley floor. Slowly they heaved upward, now losing their way, now finding a new series of rope holds. By the time they passed gasping for breath at the top of the flow the lead man was 200 feet up. Then the work of finding new footholds started all over again.

Some units had a cotton time all the way. Men pulled themselves up





onto outcroppings of rock only to have them crumble away and send them sliding downward again. Others drove pitons into rock for footholds, then lost their rifles or ammo boxes. Loosened rocks and shale clattered down ravines to chatter against the ice below in a deafening crash.

"Jesus, don't the Krauts hear us yet?" Corporal C. H. Miss whispered between clenched teeth.

By some combination of timidity and skill, several platoons managed to struggle up past the steepest part of Riva by around 2:30 in the morning. Others were straggling up behind them. In those few hours the 86th had gone through nightmare hell.

Raping or leaving their way over floating rock, using crampons to become treacherous shale slides, showing over patches of marble-hard snow, the six troops had made about 1300 feet. Some of them had found a stream but had ditched themselves in its spray as they followed the channel upward. Their parkies were icy stiff and as brittle as glass.

The night was much colder now with the mist swirling snow-like around the climbers. Occasionally the routine swoosh of a mortar shell arched over their heads to explode somewhere down below. They took a breather. Platoons tried to find their companies again, groping through the rocks and snow banks. Miss whispered cautiously, tried to estimate their present force:

There had been losses on the way up. Miss had strayed, collapsed, or been injured in falls. But as far as the dumb work, the worst was over. Somehow — from Manzanilla north to Pizzo — the 86th had made it up those devil-bidden cliffs and was ready to tackle the rocky, sparsely forested slopes.

Now the situation changed. From here on, Riva would require less mountaineering but far more military skill. The slopes with their thin pine, their boulders and shale slides, could easily hide Nazi patrols. Each tree trunk might conceal an sniper with machine pistol aimed at them. Each little patch of snow or grass looking deceptively easy to cross might be hot with land mines. To make matters worse, the Germans sometimes blindly sprayed the more accessible areas with machine gun fire — just to be on the safe side.

The regrouped 86th, showing about 15 percent losses from the cliff ascent, started again. Only about three hours remained until daylight would reveal them to the Germans.

In the south the 2nd Battalion moved on a mass toward the lower butt of Manzanilla. Its 6000 ft spine was revealed to them occasionally as the mist broke and a warm moon cast eerie light over the ridge. Carefully they moved through the trees and undergrowth, avoiding clearings and dodging behind rocks.

Hampton's 1st Battalion, connected to the 2nd only by radio, started again too. Several times both outfits reported trouble to Colonel Tomlinson's command group. Twice a voice from the 1st rasped by walkie-talkie, "German snafy spotted about 500

feet ahead!" Everything stopped. One snafy alarm could give the whole show away.

A German ski soldier in Algen's peaked cap and parka and with a tommygun slung over his shoulder, stood motionless on him in a clearing above the 1st. Lead platoons were near enough to see the heat of his labored breathing whiten the air. Every platoon in the outfit had several sawed-stump weapons who could have picked him off with one round. But the moon would reverberate up the ridge.

Then Corporal Lars Gellendorf eased forward through the brush with bow and arrows unaimed. Several snafers had come along for such an eventuality, and Gellendorf was one of the best.

Slowly, backing away his parka planked with the snowy brush, he raised himself above the GIs crouched around him. He fixed a metal-upped arrow against the bow string as he'd done countless times back in the woods of his native Michigan. Among down the arrow shaft he pulled the bow back until it looked ready to snap. Twang! A snaf of air and the German spun around with the arrow in his chest and collapsed.

Quietly moving ahead, the ski troops reached the patch of snow about 10 minutes later. Gellendorf stooped over the crumpled body with blood dripping on its skin dispassionately sawing his first human kill. Then he squatted down at his victim's collar emblem: "Jesus," he murmured in awe, "I've bagged an SS man!"

To the far north, the flanking companies creeping up toward the lower elevations of Pizzo di Campo were having an equally rough time. Slides and falls had injured and even killed some of their men.

One patrol had gone over a crevice in the dark to tumble 100 feet down slippery rock into an ancient snow pile. Badly injured, the men nearly froze to death before rescuers found them the next day.

But Company E was nearly on the brink of Pizzo now. Other squads were approaching a low spot on the ridge below Pizzo. Setting up machine guns and bazookas, they were ready to scratch Riva's back with gunfire once dawn broke.

Then a bit of light cracked the icy sky above Riva and the flickering stars went out. The 86th was now within a few hundred feet of the lower Riva plateau. Suddenly stone bits and rutted track roads hidden behind the rocks became visible. The 86th had made it!

Since midnight, they'd come up

heights of 4000 feet or more, and more than 1000 men were in pistol range of the unsuspecting enemy. Along a thin line of brush and trees just below the ridge, infantrymen got ready to charge. Other ski troops moved silently through the mist behind them to dig into the slope with machine guns and bazookas. Radio communications began chattering along the four-mile front. The murderous but not war starting in an assault which would soon make mountain warfare history.

Dawn turned the developing mist into silver. The mist still hung thick on Riva's sides, but the sun was burning it off the top until it flared in ragged patches around the high peaks. Through the mist those high spires seemed to rise like impossible stone giants above the field of pory white fields.

Lieutenant George Stoddard's platoon was by this time ahead of 2nd Battalion and working well up under the bulky south slope of Monteclio. Stoddard still led, his white parka stained with blood from a nasty rock gash which had torn through his right hand glove. The lucky Vermeier had bound the wound with his handkerchief and forgotten about it.

Sergeant Alex Dubrovski, the platoon's tough, regular Army NCO, ordered the men to halt. The rocks above were fully clear of mist now. A German was standing there! Stoddard felt his heart leap into his throat as the round-headed soldier with green field jacket thrown over his shoulders stroked out to the edge of the slope. The Lieutenant could only hope his platoon's white parkas blended with the mist hiding them. The German looked straight down at them for a moment, then stumbled drowsily back behind the rocks again.

Dubrovski grunted and crawled over to Stoddard. "What time you got, Lieutenant?"

"Just after ten," the young officer whispered back nervously. "We've got to wait until battalion cracks up the main attack." He had the suspect fan the men out about 100 yards below the silent rock pile.

The tantalizing aroma of frying bacon drifted down to them. It was absolute torture. Exhausted and starved by the six hour climb with 25 pounds of spare clothing, C rations and ammo on their backs, they bit their lips as the hot bacon smell mingled with the fresh smell of coffee.

There was a lull up and down the ridge. Then at daylight broke fall over the Apennines it started. Near

Pizzo di Campo a German sentry snatched down the trail whistling a Bavarian mountain song.

He was on his way to relieve another sentry who, unfortunately, had just had his throat slit by a creeping ski ghost. The soldier had walked no more than 30 paces down off the ridge when he stopped short.

The mist had lifted enough to reveal patches of brush and trees around him. Not more than 50 feet away, lumpy white objects loomed up among the scant undergrowth. They looked like snowmen, but they carried guns.

"Achtung," he bellowed. "Amerikanische!"

A burst of tommygun fire spun the German twirling against a pine tree. That did it. Up the slope on the higher sides of Pizzo the sharp morning air rang with cries of "Amerikanische - Feuer, Feuer!"

Machineguns clapped. Shale and snow spat around the ski troops as they hit the ground. Then somebody yelled "let 'er go", and instantly the slopes buzzed with the muzzled crackling of M-1 fire. From behind came the low rattle of an American 30 caliber methodically taking the ridge. BAR's were shaking away now too.

Companies A and B moved ahead, putting rifle fire at a hidden enemy. So far, things were going well. Because the GIs had crept so incredibly close to the Germans, the enemy couldn't use mortar fire for fear of hitting his own troops. But two machineguns hidden by mist up on Pizzo started pouring lead into the charging mass of white. Men who only a couple of years before had

been the pride of US ski teams suddenly fell to stare vacantly into the new sun.

The assault fell back. Walker-tanks teams managed to locate the site of the devastating gun fire, but not before nearly 30 men had fallen. Then a bazooka whooshed and an explosion tipped Pizzo. The ghostly rocket voice spoke again. American mortars and machine guns peppered the target too, until the misty chamber of the Nazi 30 calibers abruptly stopped.

With a tremendous shout the two companies ground up the ridge again, hopping over their own dead and wounded. Just north of them other companies including Company E hit the Nazis with full power. They reached the ridge.

Tommy grenades into gun nests, spraying likely tunnel openings with tommyguns, they drove the Krauts into the open. Sometimes they waited they hadn't. The Nazis were as tough as they'd been reported to be. Charging ferociously out, they met the ski troops with guns and drawn knives. The battle ebbed and flowed.

Below Monteclio, Lieutenant Stoddard's platoon heard the tumult drifting down from Pizzo. "No waiting now," the young officer barked at Dubrovski. "Let's hit 'em." Quickly the men moved toward the rocks, bayonets fixed. Two slopes they went - 20 more - then with Stoddard brandishing a grenade ahead of them they broke into a rock-crunching run right up to the observation post. Still nothing happened.

With all the noise they made and



"And furthermore! ... Oh sorry, Finch."

the racket from Pizzo becoming more audible every second, the sleepy Germans still didn't know anything was going on. Stoddard crouched behind the rocks, the pin of his grenade half out and a tommygunner flanking him on either side.

A small entrance opened into a hollow inside the rocks with a roof of pine branches thrown over the top. Five Germans made breakfast around a breakfast of bacon, black bread and strawberry jam, fragrant coffee. Beyond their sleeping sacks were tarp guns, machine pistols, a radio, and several sets of field glasses.

One of them looked up at Stoddard and dropped his piece of jam-bread bread. The others froze and got one of them moved. Finally one of the Germans got up and twisted a fearful smile on to his young, tanned face. "Kameed, Herr Lieutenant. You don't shoot, bitte?"

"Wouldn't think of it," Stoddard snapped. "From now on, you strange eaters are guests of General George Hays."

Really was the fight for Riva that day, however. All around Pizzo and Mount Serranuccio, Germans and GIs knifed, punched and kicked each other. The dust of 60 or 70 men grappling in one place rose in the air to replace the smothering mist. Other ski units moved onto the ridge to help, only to see potato masher grenades tumbling and over and through the air at them.

Company F moving up Mancinello really had it rough. Machineguns pinned them down several times and inflicted heavy losses. The air was hot with the smoke of bullets, the screams of the men. That same air stunk of death too. The fallen were everywhere, grotesquely sprawled out with the one last day of combat scratched away from them. But at last the GIs penetrated the

German lines. For nearly an hour they fought and chased each other through the rocks and slide slides.

The Nazis fought valiantly, but the surprise attack had come too close to allow their gun and mortar emplacement range enough to work. By noon, columns of djected German "supermen" were moving south off Riva with hands clamped over their heads. Sweating ski troops covered their march with tommy-guns, too shaken by the terrible climb and baptism of blood to feel any triumph. Stretcher bearers followed with dozens of US and German wounded.

The Riva fight had inflicted several hundred casualties on both sides in less than three hours. As the German prisoners passed along the top of Riva's cliffs, a veteran SS captain looked down to mutter over and over again, "I can't see how you did it. Impossible!"

Down at 10th Division HQ on the valley floor, General Hays was jubilant. He'd waited up all night to hear the outcome of the assault. Now his faith in the outfit soared. His men had climbed and fought with consummate skill. The rest of the Army thought so too. Messages of congratulation poured in from other IV Corps commanders, while the Fifth noted a "valiant night's work which has made history in the Italian campaign."

Hays however didn't forget his silent men still up on Riva's windy top. Knowing the Germans would counterattack to regain their lost "eyes", he supplied his men and provided them with pack artillery support. Sure enough, the panzer troops hit savagely at Pizzo that very afternoon. But this time it was GIs who held the heights. The Germans were knocked back with bloody losses.

Hays also knew the big job still

lay ahead. Calling his staff around him he said confidently, "If Riva can be taken, so can Belvedere. You're all familiar with my assault plan on the main fortress. We'll roll tonight." That time there was no doubt among the others. Riva had not only proved the troops' skill, but spoke highly of the brilliant capabilities of the division commander too. From that day on, the 10th followed Hays' orders with something akin to mystical belief.

The drive Hays unleashed against Belvedere went down as one of the great assaults of World War II. With tanks leading the way and ski patrols flanking the attack on the eight-mile front, the 10th tore at the slopes of that great Nazi mountain fortress. German SS fire screamed down to knock out tanks and blast patrols apart.

But that time the Nazi artillery fired without Riva's eyes, and was far less accurate than before.

The fight for Belvedere went on several days. Time and again the 10th - aided by the 93 Infantry and the spirited Brazilian Expeditionary Force - took the lower slopes only to retreat before Nazi counterattacks. Every outfit suffered heavy losses. Famed skier Tepper Tokle was killed. Colonel David Foster of the 87th was wounded, along with many other officers who kept right up front with their men. But the 10th kept taking back.

The Nazis couldn't stand it. Suddenly they caved in, with 400 of Hitler's finest surrendering on one day. One by one the SS's were killed, and more Alpines trudged down the shell-blacked mountain with hands held high. "Unconquerable" Belvedere was whipped.

What followed was one of the truly fantastic scenes of the Italian campaign. The 10th moved ahead to clear the rest of the way through the Apennines. Thousands of Nazi and Italian Fascist troops suddenly surrendered, rather than face an assault by the now greatly feared "ski phantoms." The outfit moved so fast the rest of the Fifth couldn't catch up with it. With the way, green Po stretching out below, the 10th actually had to stop and wait for support.

In early April, Hays proved the 10th could move as fast horizontally as it could up and down. He inaugurated what was nothing less than a blitzkrieg across the Po Valley. Riding on tanks, the 10th tore through fields and towns as if the German Army didn't exist.

When the division lost General







"The most amazing example of preservation I've ever seen."

Duff from a skull wound, Hays never broke step for a minute to look for a new assistant commander. Colonel William Derby of Army Ranger fame was in Italy looking for a scrap, and Hays grabbed him for the job. The division continued to move as fast across the Po they were often out of contact with the Fifth behind them. In late April they took a German airfield so abruptly that a Focke-Wulf pilot returning from patrol came down thinking it was fellow Germans who were waving him in.

Then the Po was behind and the mighty, snow-crowned Alps loomed ahead. Out came the skin and camouflages again. Engaging the Nazis in fierce artillery duels around Lake Garda, the 10th found itself stalemated for the first time.

General Hays then worked out tricky amphibious and tunnel maneuvers which stole Nazi soldiers holding the upper part of the Lake thought were impossible. With that same combination of skill and surprise which made the Riva attack so successful, the 10th swept Garda down the crest of the enemy.

Muscular's 27-room villa fell into ski troop hands, along with its stables and walls spilling with important Fascist documents. There wasn't even time to take a bath in the pool. The 10th moved north again, right up into the Alps.

On April 30 the legendary Colonel

Derby was killed by an 88 shell. The death made the men of the 10th only more furious for battle. Hays found his division drastically reduced in numbers but gave as hell to take on the Brenner Pass. And the Brenner led to Germany itself.

But on May 1 the Germans gave up. The 10th was then at the farthest northern Allied position in all Italy. General Hays proudly accepted honors heaped on the 10th, this time from the highest sources. General von Senger, chief of the opposing 14th Panzerkorps and a veteran of France, Russia and Italy, deemed the 10th the best bunch he'd ever fought.

Mark Clark wrote "Our great offensive was spearheaded by the 10th under your brilliant leadership."

The achievements of the division are among the most vital of the whole Italian campaign.

General Hays went on to bigger jobs. He took over for the US in the political powdering of occupied Berlin. After retiring from the Army he battled racketeers on New York's famed Waterfront Commission. But with all his battle experiences in two World Wars, and all the glory that came after, there was one time he never forgot. It was that bright, winter morning of 1944 when he walked out into the snow and knew his men had come through on Riva Ridge.

The figurehead is mounted on part of an old fishing boat.

In the same country, visitors to Alfriston are often surprised by the sight of a grotesque monster near the entrance to an inn. It is the figurehead of a Dutch battleship that fought at the battle of Southwold Bay in 1672. The ship, badly damaged, was eventually driven ashore in Cuckmere Haven. The engagement took place off the Suffolk coast, and a similar "boat", which came from another ship captured by the English, was carried inland to the village of Mortlesham.

One of the strangest resting-places was that of the figurehead of the *Guthrie*, the last four-masted barque sailing under the British flag. She was wrecked on Armistice Day, November 11, 1929, on Bonaville Island, the most westerly of the Cape Verde group. When her figurehead of a woman was washed up on the beach, the inhabitants, in whose veins negro blood predominated, looked upon this as a divine omen, rescued it from the waves and elevated it to the dignity of a saint. The figurehead was installed in a sheltered spot, where it became the object of daily devotion.

The unromantic fact remains to be disclosed that the people indicated they were prepared to sell their saint to the original owner, Sir William Gerthwaite, for the sum of 50 pounds. Unfortunately their hopes of what would have been a small fortune for them were dashed when Sir William called at Cape Verde. He politely declined the offer.

The poet Coleridge once wrote of "figures strange and sweet,
All made of the career's train."

There is no doubt as to the truth of this, but as has been suggested, little value was placed upon old figureheads at one time. So far one has referred to those from merchant ships. But the same attitude of unconcern was taken by naval authorities, until suddenly in Britain the Admiralty realized that such relics were of notable value to the morale of the Service, and with the co-operation of the scrapyard it was able to make its now extensive dockyard collections. The royal dockyards at Portsmouth, Chatham and Devonport have many examples both outside and in the museum.

One of the finest of these is on the "quarterdeck" just inside the main gate of the principal entrance to Portsmouth dockyard. The

exceptionally striking figurehead which adorned HMS Benbow, a 72-gun ship built at Rotherhithe in 1813, has been placed in a prominent position there.

The figure represents a furious sailor, Vice-Admiral John Benbow (1651-1702), who immortalized his name by remaining on his quarter-deck the night through, although his right leg had been shattered by a cannon shot. At the same time his flagship, the *Benbow*, was engaging four French warships.

Carved in yellow pine, the figurehead is painted in colors faithful to the Admiral's portrait in the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, on the south side of the Thames, east of London.

The art of the figurehead in the United States may be said to have originated with the North American Indians. They built ocean-going canoes with bows bulging to suggest such sea creatures as whales, or topped with figures of bears and other forest animals. American carpenter-made brass figureheads of famous men, Franklin, Washington, Jefferson and others. Maritime collections display a number of these old figureheads.

At Mystic Seaport, Connecticut, there is a figurehead of a Viking with a three-inch cannon ball embedded in his forehead, presumed to have been acquired during the battle against the Spanish Armada, 1588. In the Mariners' Museum, Newport News, Virginia, are to be seen figureheads of the Queen of Sheba and Queen Victoria, both draped in the Stars and Stripes.

In *American Figureheads* (1941) Pauline A. Mackenzie writes:

"The art of ship carving, like many other transplanted European arts and skills, when well-rooted in American soil flowered into something fresh and original. As a race of most immigrants, the American colonists had a strong desire not only to have about them in their new home some of the familiar objects of their former surroundings, but also to carry on those pursuits most to their liking.

"Wood carving, one of the first arts to be taken up in the colonies, was transplanted from the European countries, where it had become an art centuries before. Probably one of the first realizations of the colonists was that the new world presented many new conditions and new materials, and these in turn engendered many new ideas about work in general.

"More-over they were free to take the older forms and put themselves

freedom in any creative field is apt to bring its reward in something new, so ship carvers on this side of the Atlantic created something that we may truly call American ..."

In Britain the enthusiasm for naval figureheads should visit the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich. Outside the entrance is a woman's head with curling snakes for tresses. It represents Medusa, one of the Gorgons. This figurehead had an adventurous career. It originally embellished the French warship *Buclay Trouin*, which was fired during a British attack on Toulon, 1793. The figurehead was salvaged and placed on a vessel of the same name which fought at Trafalgar. She was captured and added to the British Fleet under the name *Implacable*.

After serving in the Baltic and off the Syrian coast for a number of years she became a training ship, a role she maintained for 35 years. In 1908, when it was announced that

this historic ship was scheduled for the breaker's yard, King Edward VII intervened and she continued as a training ship at Falmouth. Some years later — 1925 — 25,000 pounds was raised by public subscription for her repair, but by 1949 she had got beyond further restoration. On December 1 that year she was towed out to sea and sunk in the English Channel with full honors.

For centuries the designing of figureheads attracted the skill of notable carvers, including Grinling Gibbons and members of the Hellyer family. F. Hellyer of Blackwell carved the most celebrated of all the race, *Narry the Witch*, of the *Curry Bark*, perhaps the most beautiful of all the clippers. She is now in permanent dry berth at Greenwich. The figureheads were presented to her by that colorful and romantic character of the crew, Captain "Long John" Silver, a London business man.

SPINE TINGLING

Mystery

FACE OF DEAR

A MAN WHO WOULD NOT DIE

THE MAN FROM THE LAGOON

**WEIRD
EERIE
MACABRE
SPINE TINGLING**

THIS PUBLICATION IS IN THE M FOR THE MATURE READER

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He converted a house at Gosport on the Thames waterfront into the reproduction of a ship. The front room became a replica of a ship's bridge. The remainder of the house, named SS Luck-Out, was filled with maritime souvenirs.

He assembled over 80 figureheads, among them one thought to be the oldest surviving merchant ship example. This is from the Cornish frigate *The Golden Cherub* built at Bude (Cornwall) in 1683. It is beautifully carved and well preserved. The frigate, which was owned by Captain Thomas Jacob, a notorious smuggler, was wrecked off Tintagel, on the west coast of England, in 1703. The figurehead was later salvaged and kept for many years in the old municipal building at Bournemouth, a village close by.

The origin of figureheads goes back for thousands of years. They were known to the Egyptians and the Romans, and figureheads were placed on the prows of war galleys. A surprising price was paid in 1967 for an early figurehead at the London saleroom of Messrs Sotheby's. This stylized shape of a dragon's head and neck, made in wood, fetched no less

than 11,000 pounds. It is believed to have belonged to a small vessel carried by a Viking longship.

Most landlubbers can appreciate the picturesque of figureheads, but few realize how much more they meant to the old seafarers. A figurehead had both a sentimental and superstitious significance for a crew. Seamen believed that good luck accompanied all vessels provided with figureheads, and that the person or deity represented would protect the ship from foul weather. A figurehead became the eyes of a ship.

The story is told of a sailing ship that ran aground at Sydney.

She was ordered to limbo for one voyage, but when passing Sydney the ship met with a succession of baffling head winds. Veteran seafarers in the crew knew the reason — they carefully blackballed the figurehead until they were safely past their usual port.

A favorite figurehead at one time was an angel with a trumpet. If the ship was detained, the sailors would scratch the masthead and whistle for a wind, a strong hint for someone with a trumpet to start blowing for a shorting breeze.

Naval crews firmly believed that a figurehead could exaggerate the feeling of shame or disgrace. Proof of the regard in which the Royal Navy held their figureheads is seen in what happened on board the Royal George in 1778 before Nelson's electrifying personality was able to make its presence felt and when incompetence and corruption at the Admiralty had sadly reduced the fighting power of the fleet.

The Channel squadron were in retreat before the French, and a boatswain's mate scolded his hammock and looked it over the eyes of the figurehead of King George III who, whatever his other shortcomings, was not a coward in answer to an officer as to why this had been done, the mate boldly replied, "We ain't ordered to break the old boy's heart, are we? I'm sure if he was to turn and see this day's work, not all the portwine in heaven would hold him a minute."

At a time when the least infraction was punished by the cut-o'-nose tails it took a courageous man to say that, but it produced no ill result for the tar. The officers knew of, and no doubt sympathized with, the feeling of the lower deck, and probably thought much the same themselves.

The particular figurehead in question was looked upon as the finest in the Royal Navy when the Royal George was launched in 1756. It showed the monarch in heavily gilded Roman armor, with a red cloak and helmet-rest mounted on a rearing white horse. George II was the last English monarch to appear personally on the field of battle — at Dettingen, against the French in 1743.

Figureheads were also regarded as prognosticators of good or evil events. During the War of American Independence (1775-1783) the three-decker HMS *Atlas* was launched. Its figurehead was one of the mythical giant Atlas supporting the globe on his shoulders, but unluckily because of an error in design it was too large to allow the bowport to be fitted. In consequence part of the globe had to be cut away, and by ill-fortune this included the American colonies, which was regarded as an ill omen.

On the other hand the entire fleet at Trafalgar rejoiced at the fact that King George III led his ships into action because he was represented as the figurehead of Collingwood's flagship, the Royal Sovereign. It was regarded as an excellent omen when she went into action before the Victory.



"I'm afraid I have some rather alarming news, Mr Toddrell."

A DANGEROUS WAY TO FREEDOM

Continued from page 22

The thought persisted as he flung sporadic bits of earth out of the hole.

The fat man came over and shovels the trash into the hole. Fight — the word was emblazoned across the screen in his mind, blotting out everything else. Prelling batted in like a weightlifter about to push himself to the ultimate effort.

The spade began its upward move with the same weariness as before. Then, clear of the hole, it swept up fast as Prelling braced out the air like a fighter throwing a punch.

Earth stifled the fat man's curse and blinded him. Prelling lashed out at his hands. The flat end of the spade smashed down on the knuckles. Gun and torch lit the ground. Prelling flung his body forward, slowing for the gun. He felt the cool butt against his palm when the tall guy fired.

The bullet caught Prelling in the left shoulder, knocking him into the hole. Hot pain shot down the left side of his body. Was his mind playing tricks? From out on the lake came the growl of a powerful motorboat. But the dull thud and Anna's scream were very real.

He forced his body into a sitting position. A light beam hit his eyes. Squinting, he saw the tall man's gun pointing down at him. His own gun was creak up like in a slow-motion replay of an old movie. He brand himself for the bullet that would tear into him.

Another thud. The light beam left his face. Darkness was like a huge black hat as he pitched forward and came crashing down on him.

A half-suppressed sob, distant voices and dancing light. But the light dimmed like in an overloaded circuit.

It was a different type of light — something, neutral, chaotic. Prelling's eyes opened slowly.

"He's coming to." The voice came from far away, floating on air waves just like the white-clad figure that was bending over him. The face gradually came into focus — a smiling nurse.

Prelling's mind began to reassert. he was in a hospital. Not in the ward at Penitentiary jail. Only male nurses there. Why was he in hospital? He tried to shift his body. The pain in his left shoulder made him wince. And he remembered — everything.

The tall guy the nurse showed in took off his hat. Prelling knew instinctively he was a cop.

"I'm Detective-Sergeant Barton,"

he said. "You're a very lucky man, Mr. Prelling."

"Is that what you call it?" Prelling's voice was filled with suspicion. He was too tired to feel anything else.

"I do. You're alive and —" Barton leaned forward as if to give his words greater emphasis, "you can walk out of here a free man." He saw the surprise on Prelling's face and added, "We got nothing on you. We recovered the money. Besides you put two very dangerous men out of action. In a way, you did us a favor. With some help of course."

He smiled when he saw Prelling's puzzled frown. "The girl... without her you'd most likely be dead. We arrived a bit late, but we saw the last part of the action. The tall guy was ready to finish you off when she let him have it with a rock. Cracked his skull but he's okay." He chuckled. "Who knows, that crack over the head probably loosened his tongue."

"Who are they?" Prelling asked. "Two hoods — and very dangerous ones at that. Long string of convictions. The tall guy's name is Wade. He's the one that made a confession."

"What confession?"

"They killed Clancy. Probably didn't mean to, but they beat him up so badly he didn't make it."

"Beat him? What for?"

"The money," said Barton. "They thought he knew where it was. That's how we met the girl. She's Clancy's sister."

Prelling nodded. "I know."

"We got in touch with her when Clancy was found. It gave us the idea to ask her help find the money. She co-operated. She's no crook. Matter of fact, she's a fine gal." The last words were said emphatically.

Prelling swallowed hard. The battle inside him was only brief and he wondered why he wasn't really disappointed.

Barton got up. "All the best. He's seeing you." He turned at the door and grinned. "Come to think of it, I don't think I will."

The door stayed open. In its frame stood Anna, smiling shyly. Their eyes met and remained locked while she came over to the bed. Prelling reached up with his right arm, not even minding the pain that shot through his other one.

"Easy does it," was all she had time to whisper before his mouth pressed over hers.

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MYSTERY OF THE WARATAH

Continued from page 32

But the central mystery — what happened to the Waratah, and where did she go down? — remained unsolved.

The most likely theory was that she had capsized in the gale due to instability. There were suggestions that her cargo had been stowed badly in Australia and shifted suddenly with the ship's motion in the heavy seas, dragging her down. It was also suggested that she had carried an overload of coal on her upper deck when she left Durban, and this extra weight had upset her centre of gravity.

Against this, it was pointed out that Waratah's cargo was estimated before she left Durban by a local agent. Plans were put before the inquiry board which indicated there was nothing amiss in the hold. Experts pointed out that it was also quite usual for ships to carry as much as 600 tons of coal or cargo on the upper deck, and the Waratah had carried only 250 tons. This could not have affected her stability to any serious extent.

The gravest suggestion was that the Waratah's initial stability might have been insufficient. This was the charge which was likely to reflect most adversely upon the credit of her owners, her builders and the three independent inspectors who had

approved her. Most of the evidence centred round it.

The charge of instability gained most of its weight from a letter sent by the Blue Anchor Line to the Waratah's builders, just after her maiden voyage, which claimed that she was not as stable as her sister ship, the Geelong. The letter quoted a report to that effect made by Captain Ibery.

Mr F. W. Lund, the line's managing director, explained that the letter was partly a bluff to help secure a satisfactory settlement for a claim which was in dispute. But he also admitted that Captain Ibery had said the Waratah was less stable under light seas than the Geelong.

Reports from passengers who had travelled on the Waratah on her maiden voyage appeared to bear this out to some extent. They said that she had not rolled much, but had listed as far as 45 degrees in the wind and had a slow, wavy motion in a seaway. There had been talk on board that she was top-heavy.

One passenger's story was even more interesting, although possibly less trustworthy. Mr Claude Sawyer was a passenger in the Waratah when she left Sydney at the beginning of her last voyage, but he left the ship in Durban after an unsettling dream he had.

"In the early morning," he said, "I saw a man dressed in very peculiar clothes with a long sword in his right hand which he seemed to be holding

between us. In his other hand he had a bag covered with blood. I saw that three times in rapid succession during the same morning."

Mr Sawyer said he told some of the other passengers about his dream. He was convinced that it was some kind of warning to him, and decided to leave the ship. At Durban, he called his wife "Thought Waratah top-heavy. Landed Durban."

On July 28, after the Waratah had sailed out before the alarm was raised over her disappearance, Mr Sawyer had another disturbing dream. He seemed to see the Waratah plunging through a heavy sea, and as he watched a giant wave crashed over her bows. Rolling over on her starboard side, she disappeared from sight.

Mr Sawyer was not an expert witness, and he admitted that his nerves were poor. It is possible that his extreme nervousness produced a nightmare. Then again, the Waratah may have foundered just as he claimed to have pictured it.

The court of inquiry delivered its findings on February 23, 1911. The court made three main conclusions.

"The ship was lost in a gale of exceptional violence, the first great storm she had encountered.

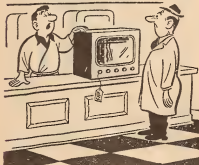
"The vessel was supplied with proper and sufficient boats and life appliances, in good order and ready for use. Upon evidence, the court is of opinion that the cargo was properly stowed, that she had sufficient stability as laden, was in proper trim for the voyage, was in good condition as regarded structure, and so far as the evidence went was in a seaworthy condition."

Given the weight of technical evidence in favor of the Waratah's seaworthiness, and the lack of evidence from survivors or wreckage, it is hard to see what other verdict could have been reached. Most of the members of the court favored the theory that the Waratah had been disabled in the storm, probably by a failure in her steam steering gear, and the big sea running had overcome her before it could be remedied.

Again, it was still just barely possible that she had not foundered in that storm at all. If her engines broke down early enough in the gale, she might have been carried gently southwards beyond the reach of the ships which searched for her. In the cold southern latitudes she might have drifted for months, and her helpless passengers and crew might have starved before she finally sank.

The mystery of the Waratah's fate has remained unanswered for the last 65 years. So far nobody has yet

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found any wreckage from her which can positively be identified. Alleged reports of survivors or of men who saw her and from the shore have all proved to be tall stories or hoaxes.

About 20 years ago, a South African Air Force pilot reported that he had seen the wreck of a large ship lying on its side in deep water a few miles off the coast. But on that day the water had been particularly calm and clear, and the same pilot failed to find the wreck a second time. It might have been the Waratah, but there is no real evidence.

Some years later a naval hydrographic survey ship in the southern ocean found another possible survivor. Its echo-sounding gear detected a tall, sharp-peaked underwater mountain, an isolated spike of rock which rose steeply from the ocean bed to within about 60 feet of the surface.

In the Waratah's day and in ours, a survey ship could find such a rock only by sheer chance. Ordinarily it might lie at a mile depth below the keels of passing ships — but it would present a grave threat to a vessel running and sailing in a very heavy swell.

There was a heavy swell on the day the Waratah vanished, and she may have encountered a similar rock as she sank into the trough of a wave. In that case, the spike would probably have ripped half her bottom out. Her holds and lower decks would have flooded as the sea could lifted her clear again, and her racing engines would have driven her under to her doom in a space of time most easily measured in seconds than minutes.

But this is only another theory. Perhaps it was a mighty freak wave, perhaps it was a sudden boiler explosion, perhaps she was top-heavy, after all. Perhaps one day, quite by chance, somebody will find the answer. Or perhaps the sea will keep its secret, and we will never know.

NEVER TRUST A MODEL

Continued from page 29

"So do I," I said, reaching for her. She was like a young cat — her firm body full of lithe grace but with a streak of sudden cruelty. I felt a searing pain shoot through my chest where her teeth sank in.

Later I lay back watching the dark outline of her face against the starlit sky. I felt like asking her Smith's real name but suppressed it. Instead I asked, "What's he to you?"

"It's none what I'm to him," she said. "He wants my body."

I could understand that. "Then all?"

She nodded quietly.

After that she came up on the roof every second night. During the day she played her role superbly, hardly giving me a glance and only speaking to me when she had to.

The days crawled along monotonously. Smith and Gina spent a fair time by the pool. Carl watched them suffer-faced and bored.

I stuck to a fixed routine. I left the roof about seven in the morning, had breakfast and slept till about one or two in the afternoon. Then I read, or walked around for a while talking to the dogs. Sometimes I went up on the roof to look at the scenery.

There were only two changes in our dull routine. One was the arrival of the delivery van on Fridays. I'd arranged with the grocer that he'd be the only one bringing the stuff.

He'd run his shop in Oberea for the last 12 years. But I played at milk-crop with him, making him unload everything outside the gate, then checking his van before he drove off. I went right through all the contents, bottles and packets. I hated this job but figured I was getting paid well for it.

The second change was the Sunday afternoons. For the past two Sundays I'd watched up on the roof. Regularly at two o'clock a Scout-

master and two teenage boys had arrived. After about five minutes' preparation they'd launch their model airplane.

In isolation any change is welcome. I'd never thought I'd look forward to someone playing with my planes. But I did. And I was always sorry when they left in their station wagon, usually around five o'clock.

Today was Sunday. It was early afternoon and I'd just got up. I climbed up on the roof to sit in the sun for a while. It didn't take long and the two arrived. They unpacked their gear and a few minutes later had launched one of their toy planes. I watched it rise, then swoop down like a hawk. Just when I thought it would hit the ground, it lurched off smoothly.

I was so intently watching I didn't notice that I wasn't alone. It was Gina. She flashed me a knowing smile before settling down in a chair. I was surprised. She'd never come up before during the day.

"It's only another week to go, so you don't care, is that it?" I asked.

"Maybe," she replied.

I went to the edge of the roof and looked down. Smith was swimming while Carl sat around doing, his feet dangling in the water.

Behind me Gina was waving to the three Scouts. They waved back. She was laughing like a happy kid. We watched another model plane take off. It seemed about, guided by the Scoutmaster.

Gina waved again. The plane suddenly dived towards us. I lurched while I waited for the landing-off maneuver.

Gina grabbed my arm. "Down," she urged. I looked at her without understanding. "Get down," she hissed and flung herself against me. Her move caught me unaware. I lurched sideways and went down. She never let go, landing on top of me.

Fast her shoulder I could see the little plane plunging down. I



INDIA'S CULT OF BLACK MAGIC

Continued from page 24

Would we have any objection to this man entering the compound?

I told them to fetch the man immediately. Although the woman was dead, I figured it would do no harm for these people to have the consolation of knowing that their own chosen "doctor" was given a chance to revive her.

In 10 minutes the fakir arrived. He looked like a living skeleton and the whole of his body was smeared with ash. The civil surgeon was shocked to notice that his left leg, from thigh to ankle was covered with running sores, and remarked that it was amazing the man had not died from blood-poisoning before now.

But the fakir was taken to the woman, whose body was still warm, though her heart had stopped. He immediately began his magical incantations. The doctor and I were asked to stay in the bungalow as the presence of anyone who had not embraced the Hindu religion would have a negative effect on the proposed cure.

We got the shock of our lives, when an hour later, the woman herself walked up the steps of the bungalow, smiling and thanking us for allowing the fakir to give her treatment. He had gone now, she said, and her husband had given him one rupee, which at that time was worth about 20 cents.

The doctor examined the woman's ankle. The marks of the cobra's fangs were still there, but apart from these she was as normal as she had been before the incident. We sent a messenger into the village with 20 rupees which he was told to offer to the fakir with the request that he return and explain how he had performed this miracle of healing. He took the rupees but failed to show up, sending back a message to the effect that, "The white snakes would never understand".

Only when it is obvious that hypnosis has been used, can a westerner have any inkling of how such feats are performed. I remember watching a typical feat of hypnosis in Beakipart, Bengal. A couple of discreet magicians drew a small crowd of perhaps 50 people round them in the market place, and one announced with much preliminary patter, that he was about to set fire to the other and convince him to subside.

Striking a match, he applied it to his companion's clothing.

(Continued overleaf)

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The guy soon began to behave like a lunatic. The onlookers stood silent and open-mouthed — so silent, in fact, that I concluded most of them were in a semi-hypnotic condition.

As I gazed, my attention was suddenly diverted by one of the village dogs, which kept snuffing round my ankles. I turned to drive it away, and when once more I looked at the "burning man" there was no sign of him! Amused at this, I blinked once or twice and continued to gaze more steadily.

As I did so I clearly observed the flames covering the victim once again. Then a thick cloud of smoke enveloped him, and when it cleared away nothing was left of him but a heap of ashes. The magicians then dipped his hands violently, bellowing and shouting, and the consumed man once more appeared suddenly in his ordinary shape.

This was plainly a case of collective hypnotic influence. The interruption of my attention by the antics of the dog had obviously broken the spell for the moment.

But besides their known skill as hypnotists, there are undoubtedly men in India who can cast themselves into a long cataleptic trance. I have never myself witnessed the burial of a Hindu under conditions of real

catalepsy, but I have the word of several reliable medical men who have actually seen such a holy man entered and dug up again after several weeks.

Drugs are sometimes used to bring about such suspended animation. One made from the juice of a plant known as the datura Suro is commonly used on the West Coast of India, and induces a long sleep accompanied by violent shaking usually followed by plunging the feet into cold water.

Libang, made from the native hemp plant, is also sold secretly in the bazars of Calcutta, and is known locally as *parah*. The man which is smoked by the hemp plant is called *charra* in Nepal, and is collected by native coolies walking through the hemp fields at the time when the plant encloses the pistil. This sticks to their skin, is scraped off and kneaded into balls. It is used by Hindu sorcerers who chew it and produce a delirium in which they prophesy.

The torments which the yogs and penitents impose upon themselves are sometimes said to be borne by the aid of such stupefying drugs, yet some of these men actually believe themselves to be invulnerable because of the medicines they have gone through.

One yogi of great sanctity who lived in a village on the banks of the Ganges not far from Benares, was convinced he was so sacred that the wild beasts of the jungle would come and lick his hand. Full of this conviction he put himself in the path of a tiger with the object of testing his belief. The tiger certainly licked his hand, but went a little further, and ended by licking his own chops.

But there are many things in Indian magic which are quite inexplicable. For example, how do we explain the numerous well-attested instances of the transportation of matter over great distances within seconds, which occurs in India and other Eastern countries?

It has been claimed that written messages and even objects of considerable size have been transferred from India to the US in this way. One baffling experience of mine occurred while I was staying at the home of a friend in Bombay just before I intended to sail for the US. I had mailed the ring of keys which fitted my cabin trunk, and since the baggage was already on board the ship I decided reluctantly that I would have to break the trunk open when I required them.

On the second day out, however, I almost dropped through the deck when I put my hand in my left pants pocket and found the ring of keys where it certainly hadn't been before! The ring and keys were quite bulky and I had made a thorough search through every pocket of the suit before boarding the ship.

Three years later I was in Bombay again. On that last visit I had tipped one of the men-servants in the house to send on the missing keys to New York if he could find them, and I hadn't been in the house five minutes on this second trip when he asked me, with a smile, if I had duly returned them.

When I told him I had, he explained that he had taken them to a holy man who lived close by, and who assured him that I would get them within a few hours, but he doggedly refused to tell me where this person lived or to give me any further information. "We are not of the same faith," he said.

Nobody has been able to offer a satisfactory explanation of how these keys were able to transfer themselves a distance of about 300 miles over water from Bombay to the ship and into my pocket. Call it fate, call it the supernatural — we do so because we don't understand. And I doubt whether the Hindus understand it, either. They just accept it as a not-very-surprising fact.



"Well, if you must know, I'm a nudist because nothing looks good on me . . ."

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ALL'S FAIR BETWEEN THIEVES

Continued from page 39

Mormon blew out the smoke in a short burst like an engine trying to get up steam.

"Let's go over it," Mormon started. "You and Andrews planned to rob me of my evening's takings. My club takes quite a lot on a Saturday night. Andrews would have known that, it was obvious to anyone. I don't know why I hired Andrews. At the time I had reservations about him but I also needed another banana. It was Luke here who told me something was going on."

The thin man seemed to blush and

then rose to collect himself another drink.

"Thirsty?" asked Cam simply.

Luke didn't even turn.

"How could a man be so stupid?" continued Mormon. "Everything he did was suspicious. It's a wonder Harvey, my assistant, didn't suspect anything. Even so, Andrews had to have help. So, when we stopped him tonight, without the bag, we knew you had got away. In that bag you have hidden away an account book. It is very important to me."

Cam started to smile his ignorance of everything when he remembered Crober behind him.

Mormon rose and walked up to him. "So we let him get away knowing he had to meet his accom-

plish — you. But he caught on and started to run. Fortunately, we were already near you. You had arranged to meet him beside the bay, in your car. Unfortunately, Crober was a little heavy-handed. And so, where did you put the bag when he passed it to you?"

"He didn't get to me, did he?" Cam retorted slyly.

"He must have passed it earlier and you were just getting together to share the money."

Cam decided to say nothing more. He was confused and worried. But it didn't help to say nothing. Crober still hit him. Again and again. The last thing he remembered was the girl gritting up all her chance to leave the room.

She had said nothing either.

The room was a cold, dark box. Cam hoped it wasn't his coffin. The floor was hard and slightly damp. He felt it — stone. His hands moved around further. The room was not very big and it was all stone except for the door. It was like a cell. He shivered.

His hands felt the door. Steel with a row of small, round bumps along the edges and diagonally across the centre. Rustic. The door was almost flush with the wall. A slight draught came in through one side.

Suddenly, the room was filled with light. He blinked and looked up. A single light bulb hung by a ragged flex from the ceiling. The room could have once been a wine cellar.

The door swung back with a squeak and Cam stepped out into a low, stone-walled corridor. He started when he saw Harvey but checked himself when he noticed Crober behind him. Crober walked ahead. Cam looked at Harvey, but Harvey shook his head and fell in behind Cam.

It was a pale, cold dawn. The pig still slanted down from the thick black clouds. A smell of stale beer and stale tobacco hung in the room. The decorative piece had gone. So, too, had the burman.

Mormon was standing at the long window staring miserably across the lawn. The rain pattered against the window pane. Cam caught a glimpse of a shaggy, grey Pacific as he passed the window. Crober's heavy hand on his shoulder forced him down to the hard wooden chair Crober had used earlier. It now stood in the centre of the room.

Mormon turned to look at Cam. "You can't go on like this," he said sympathetically, as he surveyed Cam's split and bruised face. "A few words, the right ones of course, and



"That's a coincidence — I'm working my way through college too."

it's all over. Otherwise . . ." He let his hand trail a finger arc in the air.

He looked good. The blond skin had lost most of its flame. The gray ash gave him a defeated look. Maybe he looked like that during the day, Cam wondered. He certainly looked worried — what the hell?

Creber, sitting on the cotter, looked as if he was drifting off to sleep.

"I know about you and Andrews. I just want to know where the bag is."

"We are not interested in your phoney accounts, just the money," said Harvey.

Morrison's mouth dropped open, as he looked at the gun in Harvey's hand. It was pointing at him. Creber, surprised, swung his feet to the carpet. He was just reaching for his gun when Cam stood up, stepped forward and swung his foot into the side of Creber's head. The old mate slumped to the carpet.

"Bloody well took your tune," growled Cam.

"Lucky I'm here at all," replied Harvey.

"What . . . what is . . ." started Morrison.

Cam peered about the room and

then pulled a plug from the wall socket and the other end of the flex from the music box. He pushed Morrison onto a chair and began to tie his hands.

"What the hell happened?" asked Cam.

"They caught on to Andrews."

"Who the hell is Andrews anyway?"

"He was with us."

"WHAT?" yelled Cam.

"I didn't get time to tell you. I only brought him in two nights ago. He was on to me, or he guessed something. Anyway, he cornered me and tried to shake me. Instead, I brought him in. He was useful, except it was him who stumbled. He managed to get the bag to me before they caught him. I'd already told him where we were meeting. Trouble is, he took a crowd with him."

"So that was Andrews with his sack broken. I thought it was you at first. He had a runcost like yours. Otherwise I would have cleared out."

"Thanks. It was my coat. He just took it."

"We gotta move."

"Right."

Cam finished tying Creber as Harvey talked to Morrison.

"Don't try to follow us. As soon as we reach the town, that book of yours goes into safekeeping. It stays there as long as you stay away from us."

Their chairs heaved as they clanked the steps.

"What's that all about?" asked Cam.

"That book. Keeps his accounts there. Thing is, his money doesn't go in the right directions. Could get him into a lot of trouble."

"Bout? Hey, where are we, anyway?"

"Not far from Palm Beach."

"And how do we get back to town?"

"Morrison has a garage — three, in fact — just up the road. Your car is in one of them. What made you come back, anyway?"

"Didn't mean to. I was just looking for my car when I found a note. Only could make out your name on it. Thought you might be around or arriving some time. I was going to hang around to try and contact you. Creber found me."

"You were lucky Morrison called me over. I was the only one he really trusted."

They laughed as they opened the garage doors.

"Still heading for Brissy?" asked Harvey.

"Too right, gone off Sydney for a while."

They were just about to overtake a slow Toyota when they heard the high-pitched whine of a patrol car behind them. They dropped back into their lane to let it pass. The patrol car drew level with them and Cam swore under his breath as the cop in the passenger seat signalled to him to pull over.

"What the . . ." started Harvey.

"Play it cool," Cam spat out. "Probably just a speeding rap or something."

Both cars drew up at the roadside and the cops climbed out of the patrol car. Harvey glanced at Cam when he noticed that the cops were approaching them from both sides. Cam just stared through the windscreen, the daylight showing only too clearly the new wounds on his face.

"Sugar this," said Harvey.

He grabbed the bag and opened the door. The cop on his side questioned his step and took his arm in a vice-like grip.

Cam then looked at the other cop as his registration was checked against a similar one written down in the cop's pad. Slowly, he climbed out of the car and waited. It would be a long wait, he knew. A very long wait.

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ACTION-STACKED CARDS

Continued from page 44

"If you're willing to trade for enough water to keep you alive, draw a map of your claim and make me out a bill-of-sale."

Desert Joe accepted the writing materials reluctantly and scowled.

Class went on, "I'd expect you to draw a fake map." He produced another sheet of note paper and handed it to Hitchin. "Hitchin also knows where your claim is. Your two maps will have to show enough landmarks to agree without you referring to each other before either of you gets any more to drink."

Class passed and smiled slightly. "Or would you rather play poker as I suggested before?"

Desert Joe spent a long moment observing Class through narrowed

eyes. "You are a professional turn-of-mind," he accused slowly.

"I'm not deceiving a," Class agreed, becoming poker-faced again. "I could palm cards and beat you both at poker or," he shrugged in leisurely fashion, "I could just take the gold and the water and go on."

Desert Joe turned and spoke to Hitchin for the first time. "See that you get your map right the first time," he warned. "I want water."

Hitchin continued his sally against him but he began to draw. Desert Joe talked to himself as he worked. "Stovepipe Rock is about here." He marked an X on his map while Class watched with considerable amusement. This sort of adventure was exactly what the gambler had bargained for and his interest in these strange, wild characters became so great that he relaxed his vigilance.

When the maps were completed

Class began comparing them. Desert Joe leaned forward and pointed with his forefinger. "That's a Stovepipe Rock on Hitchin's map," he explained. While Class's attention was fully on the two maps, the desert man suddenly bolted his head upward under the gambler's chin and shoved against him with all his then-reduced strength.

Class tottered off balance, failed to recover himself and had to lower his left hand to the sand to keep from falling backward. By then Desert Joe had Hitchin's revolver from his coat pocket. He brought the gun up immediately, stepping back only far enough to prevent Class from grabbing at the barrel.

Class saw the little wicked-looking black hole in the muzzle and realized the length of his life was to be measured by what happened in the time necessary to light the weapon carefully, and pull the trigger, one or two seconds.

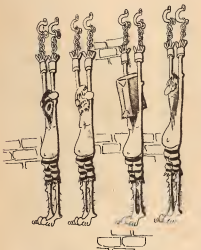
Nearly thirty paces in the gambler's mind as he regained partial equilibrium in a squinting posture in line with the pointing weapon. He had flashes of light spots he had previously been in, of gun fights in bad cattle towns and of how they had only recently threatened to hang him in one of the Comstock gold camps for a murder he hadn't committed.

It was but second nature that his right hand should seek the deck of loose cards in his coat pocket rather than flash to the derringer under his arm. In the split second of time before the organ exploded the entire deck of 53 punchboards flattered wildly into Desert Joe's face. As the weapon went off Scoreful Class dove at Joe's ankles.

The bullet ripped his shirt down the back, burning a ridge in the skin along his spine. Desert Joe came cumbering down on top of him. Hitchin jumped forward to join the fight and Class landed a solid knockout to the weakened gold thief's chin in the same movement which tossed Desert Joe off his back.

A second later he had wrested the weapon from the wasted, dry-lipped prospector and stood covering them both with it while he guffed and wiped perspiration off his forehead with his free hand. "That was damn near enough to make me mad," he admitted a little louder than his usual quiet-voiced tone. "Now when did we drop those maps?"

Class found the two maps and the time he examined them with care to keep the others at a distance. Finally he stole a quick glance at the sun. "I've wasted too much time



"He's in solitary."

already," he decided aloud. Turning to Hitcher he asked, "How much water will I need to get to Wet Creek on the east side?"

Hitcher glared a moment, then answered softly, "You won't need any, it's only about three hours' hike."

A slow smile displaced Class's poker-faced expression as he dropped Hitcher's gun into his pocket again. He knew this man was lying. Hitcher had small weak eyes, a crooked chin and there was a smothering, uneasy strain to his entire body. Class, in all pastures, had decided this man was utterly no good.

"You can't say I'm not testing you far by allowing you the same amount of water you would allow me."

Class picked up the canteen which was still full and swung it over his shoulder. The half-empty one he tossed to Desert Joe, then he picked up the bag of gold and also tossed it to Desert Joe.

"It was mighty unfriendly of you to try killing me," he told the desert man, "but I can hardly blame you for misunderstanding my motives." His poker-faced expression again relaxed. He picked up the rifle and

handed it back to its owner. "You wouldn't shoot now, would you?"

Desert Joe picked up the gold with his left hand. His right reached for the rifle but his eyes were on Class and there was an incredulous expression in them.

Class added, "I'll keep the maps and the bit-of-ale, sort of like the Kith I take in my business. The way you two were trying to kill each other you may both be dead by the time I get this far west again. If that happened and I was broke I might look up my mine and see if I could get a new strike. Meantime, Joe, you're free to go ahead and work it just as if it was yours."

Class shrugged and laughed, very much amused with himself. "Any way you look at it, I ought to have something for the water I'm giving you, and a gambler like me should always keep some sort of act in the hole."

Swinging toward Hitcher, Class concluded, "You're just a plain double-crossing scound, and I wouldn't know what was right to do with you. That's why I gave the water to Desert Joe. He's at least honest and does his fighting for what's his own. I hope he treats you decently."

Class tossed his coat over his arm. The sun was in the clear now. As he strode off westward he began mopping his neck with his handkerchief. It was mighty damn hot. He was a little curious about what the two men behind would do but he felt in no danger.

The gambler knew men. It made no difference where you met them, in a crowded saloon in some whisky-crized cattle town or alone on a wide, heat-drenched desert, the same selfishness and greed was found everywhere. Still, there were way few men who would deliberately shoot another in the back.

It was late the following afternoon when Class trudged wearily into Wet Creek. His water was just about gone and he was tired as hell but his right hand kept fingering the deck of cards in his coat pocket. There was some new adventure here, still unopened, and Class was already impatient for action.

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ESCAPE FROM UGANDA'S "BLACK HOLE"

Continued from page 53

At least two Protestant medical missions were emptied under arrest procedures and all the people, women and children too, were degassed all the way to the jail. The Ugandan soldiers were drunk and screaming and laughing at people with their rifle butts. Anyone knocked to the ground lay there bleeding till a collection party dragged them aside.

Sort of an afterthought, I was pulled up to my knees by two soldiers. The slight increase in pain didn't make that much difference anymore, and I think the change of position was helpful.

A truck came in with what looked like business men and their wives. They might have been agricultural advisors. They were dressed for the back country. It was obvious that most of the men had already been beaten.

I can't describe what I heard — the constant yelling and screaming and cries of pain. It assaulted the ears. The only way I can liken it is going into a small, tiled room with a stereo playing the loudest record you can find at the highest volume available.

I think I passed out a few times. Maybe a bucket of water was thrown at me. Another time a jeep-load of the Special Branch arrived, and I wondered what else they could think of to do.

The roundup had ended and the interrogation was starting. That's what it was all about. All the previous beatings and tortures were just to weaken morale, get people in the proper frame of mind to talk.

Water was thrown on me — the sticks were pulled away — the cords cut. I couldn't walk so they dragged me into the jail. It was a great, huge room, the whole rear was one big cell. Two desks were the only furniture. Against one bare wall, a Ugandan hung from handcuffs, cowering on overhead beam. He was a "rebel" who had invaded Uganda.

They pushed me into the big cell. People yelled and protested that one more couldn't fit. Women had their children against the bars to give them air, and were protecting them from the crush with their bodies.

Jimmy Blane found me, although I didn't recognize him at first. His head was swollen like an ugly fruit. He had been beaten with gun stocks for the crime of having Sukuma parents. There was a White Father with him who'd had his long robe torn off at the knees.

"Here," he said, "we've got to get water onto you. It'll reduce that fever."

They pushed and pulled through the crowd and finally reached the sinks. The Father ripped the sleeves out of his light white shirt, wet one at the faucet and wound it around my head. He used the other to drip water into my mouth.

A Protestant medical missionary said, "Serious dehydration. Make sure he gets plenty of water. There could be kidney malfunction."

Meanwhile, torture was going on in the main room. The jail cell we were in was about 30 feet long, eight feet wide, and held at least 40 people. More available space was taken up by three blocked toilets and three sinks. The temperature was about 120 degrees. We sweated on each other and breathed fog.

"Out! Out! Out!" a Special Branch officer yelled. "Men only. Suspects only." Since we didn't know who were suspects, we just kind of spilled towards the door when it opened. Soldiers were waiting there and we quickly found out who were suspects — all males except the White Fathers and Protestant missionaries. They were under "protective arrest."

The soldiers drove us outside into the night, across the road to a box-low shaped storage bin where they keep what they call maize, a type of corn. It was about 15 feet high and empty. We had to scramble up the ladder by flashlight, cross the overhanging grass roof, drop down through a hole, and get the hell out of the way of the next man.

It was out of the frying pan and into the fire. There were about 30 men in a diameter of 13 feet or so. A soldier put the lid on the roof. Men screamed and howled, one guy kept crying we were going to die and he wasn't wrong. Crashed in, body to body, the temperatures soared and we were dripping on each other again.

I found out I didn't have a kidney malfunction when I urinated against the wall. Then I pleaded with anybody who had anything in his bladder to come over and drop it in the right spot.

Some thought I was stark raving mad, others called me uncomplimentary names, but a few got the idea and contributed things my one-and-a-half-inch belt buckle. I started clapping at the mad wall. Wet pieces began to fall away. Soon I came to a woven grass mat and started leaning at it. That was when I ran out of strength.

Everybody was interested in the

project now. Ideas made room for me to stretch out near the wall, and other heads took my place.

All I can say is that when we broke through the wall and fell outside into the 100-degree darkness, we thought we were in a cool breeze. The comparative coolness helped us regain strength as we lay flat on the earth.

One of the men had completely lost his grip from being in the "black hole." He'd had to be pushed out, and now, as he became conscious, he started to mumble. If we were caught now we wouldn't stand a chance of surviving.

One of the Englishmen made it to his feet first and quietly called off. He was back in less than five minutes and said there was a truck we could take. Another Englishman who said he wasn't leaving without his wife, got up and walked calmly for the jail. Jimmy and I went with him, like it was a natural thing to do.

The soldiers made me bomb-out drunk. The guard was cross-eyed from booze. Jimmy hit him and took his automatic rifle. The Englishman pulled a Bren gun from a locker and stuffed a banana chip into the slot.

"Get them out of here," he nodded towards the clump and the women and children. I opened the doors, herded them out and Jimmy put them in one of the trucks. Then I went back in to see if the Englishman needed any help. He didn't. As I walked in the door, that Bren started talking.

Jimmy and I took the Land Rover and two crowded trucks followed. I wish I could say we shot our way through the border, or were very clever, but nothing important happened.

A Ugandan Rover did come racing cross-country to get on the road behind us, but a blast of Bren and automatic rifle fire either discouraged the driver or killed him. Whatever, the Rover went off the road.

The border station staff wasn't manned by Ugandans, just Tanzanians, which might tell you something about the "insurance." They were extremely kind, gave us cold or hot tea according to preference, and guided us to a refugee camp.

That's all I can tell you. I did see Ugandans armed with AK-47 assault rifles, but those are all over the world. I saw them in Vietnam too. I think these few Ugandans were the best ones.

I'm back at work now at my old job, and I wouldn't return to Africa if they were going to make me potentate of the place.

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